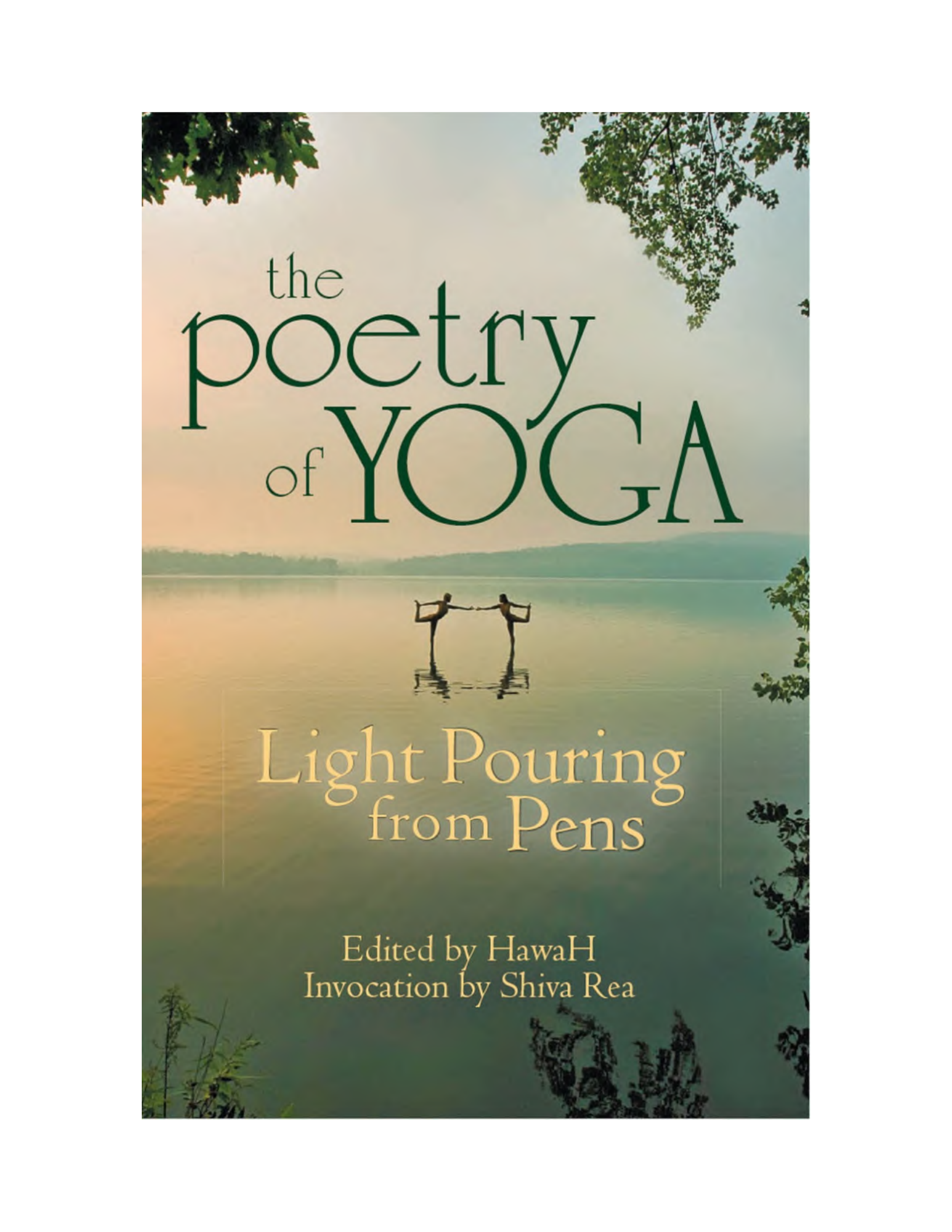


the  
poetry  
of YOGA

Light Pouring  
from Pens

Edited by HawaH  
Invocation by Shiva Rea



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## Praise for The Poetry of YOGA

“Perfect for solitary contemplation, this anthology is full of yogic wisdom.”

–Yoga Journal Magazine

“This book is a link that paints an important picture and gives us that experience of looking beyond appearances and feeling that profound parallel between the yogic experience and poetry.”

–Rod Stryker

“This book is the soul ignited.”

–Sianna Sherman

“These beautiful poems speak to and are expressions of the very heart of yoga.”

–Kelly Birch, Editor, Yoga Therapy Today

“To have yoga without poetry is like having marriage without love. Poetry is the essence of beauty in language. I am grateful for HawaH having put together this volume to inspire yoga students with the beauty of meter and verse.”

–Aadil Palkhivala, Master Yoga Teacher

“This collection of poems is a beautiful expression of the collective consciousness of the modern day yoga culture.”

**–YOGANONYMOUS**

“As I started to scan through the pages, I felt like I had won the lottery!

Like a beautiful asana, each page contains words perfectly aligned to lift my soul. I had been given the gift of a book of yoga poems that I know will provide inspiration for my life and my yoga classes for many years to come.”

–The Daily Downward Dog

“This book is a sweet gift offering to any poetically inclined yoga practitioner and a perfect item to have at yoga studios. Often, instructors will be able to bring resting students back from Savasana with an inspiring reading. The Poetry of Yoga offers a trove of fresh selections. Like asana practice itself, each visit to the book will bring new discovery and communion.”

–Mount Shasta Magazine

“It is such an incredible combination of yoga and poetry that we were literally ‘blown away.’ It has so many great poems and the offerings from the yoga community makes us proud and happy to be a part of something so special.”

–Flow Yoga Magazine

“This book is successfully building momentum to revitalize the ancient tradition of yoga poetry.”

–Art of Zen Yoga

“*The Poetry of Yoga* is an amazing book. . .featuring some of today’s greatest yoga teachers!”

–Opposing Views

“*The Poetry of Yoga* anthology harnesses the energy of a great movement of healing arts practitioners. . .and crossed the lines to gather and contribute 21st century reflections of the state of an ancient practice. . .”

–Tribe

“I used to dream about living in the desert, where the mountains turned pink at sunset, snow graced mountain tops, and every star and galaxy in the sky opened its glimmering eyes; now it is all here in an anthology!”

–Sister Hawk

“A powerhouse book of poems!”

–Where is My Guru

“Heartwarming, funny, inspiring and enlightening. A great collection for poetry lovers—whether you practice yoga or not!”

–Chelsea Edgett

“Lots of people write and read poetry and we should all come out of the closet about it.”

–Mind Body Green

“A monumental work of art, compiled and offered as a global reflection. The many poems, colors, perceptions and cadences, in *The Poetry of Yoga* together stand as one glowing source of light. . .one representing our generation.”

–Hosh Yoga

“When you’re a child and read Dr. Seuss, poetry becomes part of the childhood landscape. This is a playful, contemplative, whimsical, serious gateway back to that place. Rhyme or not, long or short, this collection of poems skewers the heart and spirit with a joyful edge. It’s a must-have for any library!”

–Sherry Hanck

“I’m impressed, there is actually a whole, budding theory on how yoga and creativity can work together in all kinds of mediums, from writing, to

painting, to music, or just dealing with issues coming up in whatever work it is you do. We need creativity in all aspects of our lives, and in order to access it, we have to be willing to step out of our comfortable boxes.”

–Spirituality and Health

“This book is a great victory. A voice to contemporary yoga. Through this book we get to see the somatic power of consciousness.”

–Shiva Rea

the  
poetry  
of YOGA

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of YOGA

*Light Pouring from Pens*



Edited BY HawaH  
Invocation By Shiva Rea

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Ring the bells that still can ring  
Forget your perfect offering  
There is a crack in everything  
That's how the light gets in.

—Leonard Cohen

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# Invocation

This book



you hold in your hands  
comes from breathing bodies.

Tenderized through the fire of yoga transformed by moments and

years of practice and  
letting go into the natural flow.

It can happen to anyone

when you least expect it  
the creative fire arrow releases in the middle of a meditation a wide open  
asana

or a deep embrace  
while you were turning the corner or dressing your child

or calling out in kirtan

falling down

rising up



cracking open  
exhaling as freedom born again.

The sages say,  
You can teach science to anyone and turn them Into a master.  
But not even a Guru can awaken the flow of poetry.  
It releases spontaneously from within.

This inner creative fire of yoga churns life experiences

into poetic shakti

with the power

to ignite the dormant

dissolve barriers  
and sustain connection to your deepest source.

This book will hold you  
as the poets of each page become intimate friends,  
guiding you through the inner landscape echoing a wisdom teaching,  
a tenderness,  
a mirror of your own truth.

If you become receptive inside you can work with this book like a mala  
each poem an offering  
arising at the right time like a precious jewel remembering what was lost,  
forgotten or hidden.

This book is a great victory

a celebration

for the cells who carried the creative spark through time for the Sages who poured the nectar of realization into the hymns, songs and sutras that were the poetry of the Vedas, Upanishads, Gita, Tantraloka.

These poems are not lost in post-modern translation but alive with the current of all poets who have vibrated their truth in treacherous times.

These poems are a tribute to those extraordinary poetic teachers such as Kabir, Lalla, Mirabai, Rumi, and Tagore whose teachings wrapped in love songs to the Divine helped us become more human.

May all who hold this book be transformed by the twilight language of poetry that bows to the eternal in a million different ways.

Each poem will find you at the right moment and bring you closer to the author and also your Self.

In a world that is trying to find a compass to navigate rough waters ahead, Poetry is the unexpected divining rod, a nadi line between time

an ear to the ancestors  
a yoga practice for the soul.

To honor the poetic revelation, revolution and evolution that our brave  
editor, HawaH calls forth:

May you take up a new or old yoga sadhana with a pen And blank page.

Bend your outer mind into your heart.

Inhale the fire that waits for us all.

Write a poem from your breathing body and feel the yoga of poetry. . .

A handwritten signature in black ink. It features a small, stylized symbol above the letter 'i' in 'Shiva'. The signature reads 'Shiva Rea' in a cursive, flowing script. A long, sweeping underline extends from the end of the signature back towards the left.

*Shiva Rea*



## Prologue

I've been practicing yoga and writing poetry since I was a small child. Fascinated by the rhythm of verse, I started writing around the age of eight with my sister in the back seat of our family car. A couple years older than me, she stared intently out the window composing rhymes of passing birds and clouds. Ever since that day, poetry has danced in my blood.

Yoga, similarly, was inspired from a family member; in this case, my mom. A devout Hindu, she encased Hanuman and Ganesh in picture frames above my bed. Back then she taught me different mantras to chant during prayers and ceremonies. I guess you can say I first began my journey to yoga through Bhakti.

When not diving into my yoga practice, I am often found with pencil in hand, scribbling down a poem, or nose in a book, reading ancient poetic verse. The two seem rather inseparable, since many sacred texts were communicated through poetry, including the Bhagavad Gita, The Tao Te Ching, and the Holy Quran. I feel affinity toward the power of poetry in transforming lives, and in a similar way, witnessed my own life changed by yoga.

Doing yoga pushes me inside, and writing helps me communicate outwardly. I was moved by the creative possibilities of knitting together the two and wanted to share this love and passion with others. In 2009, I started developing a workshop called *The Poetry of Yoga*, doing just that.

To get the formula right, I taught it a few times in my hometown of Washington, D.C., and then took it on tour by the summer of 2010. In the beginning I had no plans of pulling together a book. I was visiting cities throughout the country, encouraging people to write poetry while doing yoga. Each workshop proved a powerful outpouring beyond my expectations. During the workshop, I would teach sequences of asana broken up with creative writing prompts. At climatic moments participants wrote poetry while actually in asana.

In the first two hours, we completed a dynamic asana sequence, after which the participants wrote a few poems about their feelings and experiences during their practice. The next hour we spent in a circle, sharing all we had written. In many cases, the sharing put most of us in tears and proved instrumental to the process of transformation and healing. In the final thirty minutes, I did a spoken word poetry performance that framed service, love, peace, healing, suffering, sustainability, and freedom. About half way through the tour, I realized the soul-stirring poetry we were creating had to be shared with others. And so, was birthed, *The Poetry of Yoga* book idea.

The new mission I charged myself with was to help kick-start and harness a modern day renaissance of Hafiz, Mirabai, and Rumi. I figured I could do this through expanding the literary tradition of yoga to include the cultural perspective of the 21st century.

Most of the celebrated mystic poet yogis have long been deceased. I envisioned the book as a platform for a new body of work reflecting on how yoga continues to shift the landscape of human consciousness and civilization. A book anthology of modern-living poetic voices was exactly what I was being called to create. I knew they were living amongst us, and simply needed a platform to share their existential expressions.

Here began the effortless unfolding. Sure there was lots of work

involved, but in the larger scheme of things this project took on a life of its own. I began to accept online submissions of poetry in October of 2010 for the book. Over the next six months I received over 1,500 pages of poetry from 16 different countries. The outpouring of breath-giving poetry revealed that I was not the only one with this idea. There came a point, during the final week of submissions, when over 35 poems were submitted each day! I officially closed submissions on April 15, 2011.

To supplement and excite people about the idea, I asked living master teachers and writers from around the world to also contribute poetry to the project. I wanted to get their voices in the mix, and began sending out invitation letters over email to those I knew. I planned to integrate and combine the words of established teachers with everyday people, as well as participants who attended *The Poetry of Yoga* workshops.

In order to land such an all-star cast of featured writers, I delicately persisted. . .over and over and over again. It wasn't enough to send emails, so I traveled, went to workshops, and met the practitioners I wanted to include in the anthology. In person, I told them about my idea and asked if they would participate and help.

I was struck by the awesome response from the established teachers. The only time someone said, "No," was in their adamancy that they didn't write poetry. Interestingly enough, one of my goals was to encourage yoga teachers and students to step out of their comfort zones and write poetry, even if they had never done so in the past.

I felt this was a very important piece to the puzzle. I believe extensive schooling in one specific subject area creates a boundary of pre-condition, limiting one's creative and expressive capacity. This often sets unimaginative parameters on how you think something is supposed to sound, taste, touch, or feel. Some of the most brilliant and beautiful poetry I've read is from people who have never written a poem before.

It's fresh, new, and contains a perspective devoid of this pre-conditioning. If you have ever read anything by Picasso you know exactly what I mean. He's a painter, but when he wrote. . .his words rang with an eloquence, breathing clarity, conciseness, and creativity that a thoroughbred writer would find hard to achieve.

And so I fished for poetry from the far reaches of the globe. . .searching for the undiscovered modern day Rumis and Hafizs, posting the International Call for Submissions on websites, list-serves, and using social marketing tools to get the word out. It seems it might have worked. A litany of emails started coming through the comments page on the website; personal emails I received from people expressed that the project inspired them to write their first poem ever; others spoke to the timeliness of such an anthology. What began as a one-human guerrilla operation became a poetic movement, harnessing social media for extensive outreach in gathering a plethora of submissions.

The reading of all the poetry that came in has been an absolute pleasure and joy. It was an honor to have my finger on the pulse of such creative, soul-inspiring, and mystical poetry from around the world. It took months to read the work over and over again. I've been doing this while on the train (staring out the window between poems to catch my breath), while sitting in Upavistha Konasana in my meditation room (burning sage and watching the flickering candle light dance across words), while at the park (serenaded by drum circles), while at the coffee shop (smelling the aroma of awakening), and while sitting in the doctor's waiting room (no hurry, I was reading patience).

I've created distance and space by reading the same poems in different environments, seeing how they affected me at different times. Making the decision about what would appear in this collection was a monumental task. In order to protect any bias, I read the poetry without seeing the names of the authors. After reading and sorting the work into

large piles through an internal system of poetic theme and quality, I began to move poetry from pile to pile. Slowly I narrowed the work down to 450 pages, still too much for one book! It seemed unfair to try and limit the work to one anthology. So I decided to turn the submitted poetry into two anthologies and make use of this opportunity to broadcast to the world all these tremendous poetic voices.

I included poems from Sri Lanka, Ireland, Philippines, China, Wales, Guatemala, India, Norway, U.S.A., Australia, Japan, Pakistan, Romania, Mexico, England, South Africa, Brazil, Canada, *etc.* . .to assure the anthology contained a diverse chorus of voices that represented different geographical regions of the world.

My editing preference was to also value and honor diversity of theme. Some of the hardest decisions to make were filtering poems touching on the same theme. For example, it's possible someone wrote a brilliant poem about "breath" that was not accepted because a third of the poems explored the theme of breath. To keep the book balanced I only included a handful of poems on breath, meaning I had to make some very hard choices. . .breathing. . .

Poetry and Yoga. . .as inseparable as ocean and sand. Together they create a mirror glass reflecting the enlightenment inside of us. Yoga turns us inward as we discover the graceful flow of our bodies interacting with breath and spirit; poetry channels expression outwards, pouring in the shape of words onto paper. Letters bend as a yoga asana, creating paragraphs with our lives. Feelings unravel in the form of sentences buried deep inside.

Dawn looks forward to dusk. . .resting its enlivened eyes on a paintbrush, a sunset, a head on a yoga mat. The yoga mat is the canvas for many artists unscrewing the lid to the soul jar. . .peering inside and liberating the colors. . .yes, there are still colors we have yet to see. . .time is moved by oceans; sand wishes to become glass again; rebirth;

your body paints poetry through asana on a canvas mat; love is just moments away; union.

In a world filled with contradictions, we need steady confusion to assist us in knowing clarity. A light bends into the crevice of a heartache. . .our hearts open to the dancing knowledge of expression. We are at the cusp of spiritual revolution in the modern day.

This collection of modern day poetry is testament. It sings of not only Mirabai and Hafiz. . .but Swenson and Rea; it breathes not only of Rumi and Gibran. . .but Folan and Stryker.

This book is a clear signal that forgiveness and compassion are rooted in our souls. . .as deep as the need for survival is the need for creative expression and cooperation. Technology cannot dampen our poetic spirits. Instead we are creatively learning how to use it as a tool to help us express and release what is locked in our muscles and bones. . .through spirit-filled words. With all of your loving kindness and support my initial mission has been accomplished.

Now, the other part of the mission is for this anthology to raise money for the dynamic work of a great non-profit organization called One Common Unity. Ultimately, I hope this book and the subsequent volume, will provide a sustainable source of revenue for the work they have been doing since the year 2000.

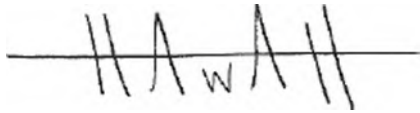
*One Common Unity supports a movement for peace education and the building of a nonviolent culture through music and art.* More specifically, they facilitate arts-based health and wellness, conflict resolution, and nonviolence education for inner-city youth.

Spiritual warriors, compassionate renegades, lovers of truth and seekers of wisdom. . .the time is now; let these words breathe through the pores of your skin. Let your mind stir, the hairs on your arms stand, and let this be a reminder that we have not lost our souls.

Regardless of your race, nationality, sexuality, age, class, religion,

or gender, there is something in this book for everyone. Read in awe and wonder. . .as I did. . .I hope you do. . .embrace all the magical poetry in this collection. Take it around the world with you and let it serve proof of the modern day poetic soul of humanity.

Your Reflection,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'H', 'A', 'w', 'A', and 'H' in a stylized, cursive font. The signature is written over a horizontal line.

HawaH

# Compassion

Your shoes  
Are on my feet  
I know now  
Why your socks are ripped  
The draft moves my heart.

HawaH



Leza Lowitz

Prasad

That sound you hear?

It's my frozen heart melting.

Bringing each drop to my lips, I cover my body freely,  
wet with your name.

My lips become your lips,  
my body your body.

When I take you into me,  
the world goes on forever.

I will find peace

in these fragments.

This pain will be the cure.

*Prasad: Sanskrit, literally, "A precious gift." An offering, usually a sweet or some other food, blessed by an enlightened being and given to her/ his followers.*

Leza Lowitz

In a Corner of the Body, a Thief Sits Waiting

In a corner of the body, a thief sits waiting  
to steal your affection.

Like a pickpocket in the black market, he hides in the dark alleys of the  
body, but your virtues are a lantern rooting him out.

Catch a glimpse  
as he rounds the corner hoping to hide in the hip joint.

Watch him fly

as he darts between the shoulder blades, wedges himself therein.

Marvel as he ducks  
under the sacrum, sticks there like a thumbtack.  
Rejoice to see him tumble headfirst into the pelvic bowl, jeering as he  
peers around its rim.

Don't let his alacrity fool you.  
He's as slow as what limits you, holding you back just as much.  
Once you catch him with your awareness, don't throw him into prison.  
Don't bind him up in rope.  
Rather, hang him out in the light, and praise him effusively.

For when the chase is over, he will have taught you the many secrets of  
the maze, and you can start to polish all those precious gems he's been  
guarding.

Leza Lowitz

The Edge

Each time the world  
pushes you to the edge asking of you  
more than you can bear, go ahead anyway  
even if—or because—  
you're straining against an invisible net.

Let yourself burst at the seams until the seams themselves stretch, and  
the net tears, floats away into the nothingness  
from which you came.

Who holds the net anyway?

Everything it contains will come rushing forth.

Embrace it all, and then some.

You'll grow bigger than you ever imagined.

So much I want to say to you, teacher!

But you say: *just live your best life.*

*It speaks so much more eloquently  
than words.*



John Navin

## In Me

Once, I was looking for fireflies in the night, Now, I find all the stars are shining in me.

Once, I was getting lost on the way, Now, I find all roads joining in me.

Once, long seasons passed in waiting, Now, all meetings are happening in me.

Once, even the rivers were running dry, Now, all the oceans are dancing in me.

Once, the leaves of autumn were floating, Now, a million springs are blooming in me.

Once, each moment seemed full of clamour, Now, even time has fallen silent in me.

Once, even sparks were missing in life, Now, a thousand lamps are alight in me.

Once, hands were joined in prayer,  
Now, infinite blessings reside in me.

Once, the soil of the heart was parched, Now, bountiful showers are pouring in me.

Once, the earth was just like a prison, Now, the boundless sky lives in me.

John Navin

## Timeless Song

In the heart's dawn  
rises a sacred song,  
filled with your light.

It gently touches

my myriad passions

that bloom into  
an ardent love.

This fragrant prayer



floats into clouds

of devotion that

pour down in  
the rains of joy,

flowers of tears  
at your sacred feet.

Once more the

world rejoices

in the thrill of  
a secret love,  
a timeless melody,  
always ancient,  
yet ever-new.

Randi Martin

## Gratitude for the Mat

I lay you down to greet the sun, a firm base for my tadasana.

You grab my hands as I bow down, securing my pose in your grip, never the first to let go.

As breath stretches limbs, heavy memories trapped in cells shed from my skin.

You fold them up in your tight lips, never to speak of them again.

You are my rock, my roots, my cradle in Savasana.

You transform from solid to soft, echoing the process of practice.

Only you witness those sweet divine moments when tears slip from my face to yours.

A closing OM benediction soaks into your fibers, ending our union for now.

I say goodbye with a curl of my fingers and fasten you up, hoping to soon meet again.

And so, my loyal friend, rolled in the corner

like a fresh cut log,

waiting in your quiver to be unwrapped for worship,

I thank you.



Lalita Noronha

## Love Is

Love is an illusion until you can love yourself in your disappointment, in your uncertainty,  
in a vacuum of nothingness.

Love is moving out of fear of your body, your mind, your self into the quest of acceptance.

Love is feeling wretched, and knowing it's okay.  
love is listening to beads pour; love is the burble of brooks, the beat of your heart.

Love is letting yourself be in love, out of love, tired of love.

Love is all of it because you and only you,  
know the courage it takes to be in love  
with you,

when your body screams, No.

Barry Denny

Seeing Milarepa: a Movie About a Tibetan Saint

It makes me sad to see pigeons well-fed

by the veiled woman refusing to share nuts with squirrels

I walk to Cinema Village

Enemies are never ending popcorn is finite

whispers the ticket taker

Milarepa sought salvation for vengeance taken against mind and bone of  
those who'd done him harm

He wrote poems

of skillful means

taught compassion served tea I write notes in the dark

There are lines we can not change camera angles which test our will

whispers the ticket taker

Barry Denny

## Broken Glasses

the woman enters yoga

late



shifting to make room

i crush my bifocals

a hundred expletives

upon her banana blonde hair

until i remember

almost dying in the cold

last winter

when a metal beam



fell from a building

crashing against my shadow  
we're all vulnerable

without sight improvement technology  
my vision's 20/200  
it's night

oncoming headlights

shine like mutant fireflies  
i lift my shirt and sternum

beaming blurry eyed compassion

at a hundred taxis

at every bone



ever broken

every nuance

ever grasped

Lisa Rosinsky

### Prayer Without Flowers

O Lord, You gave me a vase to keep loveliness in.

I have filled and refilled it my entire life; but every time, the light within the beauty I have gathered fades away, leaving fragrant memories that turn to powder when I handle them.

So now I display Your gift empty. I admire it simply for its form and solitude, and for the way it craves to be filled.

Dehejia Maat

Exhale

Who dem spirits

you be fighting



when we be making love

How you gonna show me

sun sky rain

not expecting to see

Rainbows

dancing sidewalk

under my feet

Yoga in the afternoon



Sunshine when I look up

The promise of sweetness

you say

No Goddess left behind

I say

I am

you say

like sweet fruit



I say

nobody love you like me

moaning sweet and low

does breath life love

green blue black and yellow

stop

do eyes say  
what's read

when you grab hold



You like my potions

love them even

drink them down

Without

question

Or hesitation

## Sundials

alabaster



Lapis

Orange Peel

Copal & Myrrh,

Brown sugar & Amber

Honey & Lemongrass

There is a healing

happening

while these things burn

There is a sweet smell

a warmth

emanating throughout

Wide-open spaces



Warm desert breezes

Muladhara to my Sahasrara

Chakras spinning

Inhale

Like a midday breeze

Surrounding you

Getting lost

then



Finding self again

Dropping old memories  
I'm placing beautiful things

in the temple

and

it smells like bliss

This exorcism was needed

Space and peace

now



Catherine Esposito Prescott

## A Daily Practice

Weight on my hands, knees bent,  
arms like metal brackets, elbows pointed, making 90-degree angles of my  
arms.

If I were stronger I'd lift one knee and balance it on the table I've made  
between forearm and elbow, but with a body not yet  
fit after carrying and birthing a third child, I'd rather assume child's pose

—

Arms flung forward, kneeling in surrender.

The teacher says: Fear limits us.

I've been fearful all my life: of elevators, escalators, flash mobs, planned  
mobs, on New Year's Eve, Times Square on a spring day,  
streets littered with too many souls, vultures circling skyscrapers,  
alligators.

The teacher says: Can you play with fear?

What he means is can you make a space within your fear for the grace of  
one breath?

Can you breathe in it, can you breathe through it?

Can you balance it with peace, with hope?

When I taught second graders how

to write poems, I asked them think about hope and fear. To them, hope  
was anything

from "hugging my mother" to "having dinner with my whole family."

Fear was more than once "hearing gun shots on my street when I go to  
sleep" and "not passing into the third grade."

I rise up, with shoulders solid as pylons in the ocean. One knee balances

on my forearm.

I lean forward, lifting the other leg. My fear hollows in the wave of each breath. My fear

like the cicada shells I'd find in springtime: hard, brown, brittle. I never saw one shed its shell, never witnessed the change from nymph to adult, from one way of being to another, but at night it happened again and again. Moon as witness, stars as witness. Nothing in this class is as scary as life. I unbind and emerge. Space in each breath, opening in the body, the mind, feet parallel, strong center, palms together. The world outside, outside. The teacher's voice within: Your practice begins when you leave this room.

Meri Nikula

Under Your Very Toes

Along with its fellow planets

Rolling on

In their limitless playground

This bluegreen wonder marble



Lets us in

For a free ride

Turn after turn

We humans

Ego-logically shortsighted

Trotting about, unaware

Tickling and tingling the earth-skin

As we go

Stop!

And listen

And listen again

Under your very toes

(Can you hear the giggle?)



Sia Tiambi Barnes

Limbs

(Nidra)

I dream of nothing but this one moment when all of me

has expanded  
beyond recognition  
(Tapas)

I crave sugar  
when I've lost sweetness, but dare not medicate such a wound with a  
Band-Aid.  
Rather, I grow from within the nectar of seekers.

(Prana)

I am ever moving wind that makes the music of chimes and the rustle of  
leaves, lest you forget I am ever with you dancing upon your tongue.

(Transformation) This playground is lonely without the knowledge of  
laughter.

(Natarajasana) The body

she remembers

all the toils of the mind, war crimes,  
humanity industrialized.

Still, she finds balance.

But she's a victim of the injustice of time.

Behold her for a moment and with the blinking of eyes she falls into the  
next.

Pray love embraces her and she escapes the gripings of death.

Repetition of steps: the deception of stress revealing all of man's neglect  
with untamed beatings of the chest.

Still, what joy to be gifted with such a mess.

What life to live with the promise of no regrets.

Will Duprey

Untitled

with a feather  
the universe is untangled

Will Duprey

## Sadhana

I have crossed this Earth as  
a student and didn't see you as a teacher  
and could not conjure you I lifted stone  
and stepped in soil I have chanted your name and breathed the techniques  
practiced the particulars that are mentioned in texts representing you  
I have found these beautiful stones placed them on the altar and  
dedicated it all to you  
I have picked up fallen petals and plucked new ones all for you

I watch the moon

and feel the breath and a mudra one that tastes you I have been tired and not rested and I've fallen in the darkest depth I have danced and sat been brave and a coward have stolen and given my all Animals, children and people have loved me I have believed them all and none of them these years seem so short a yesterday, at best

Helena Markus

## God, Whispering

Inside of  
one snowflake  
there is a  
waterfall  
where God is  
taking a bath.



Kellie Pemberton

Solid

In the dawn of summer,

I slipped out from the cabin

Unleashing myself, alone into the unknown Crept free from any tracings  
of my whereabouts.

Skipped along, downhill upon a dirt path Stenciled by the rising Sun

Matching breath with step

Hopping from one stone to the next Dancing round trees agilely

While fire breathing  
The ambrosial scents of morning Honoring everything divine—within  
this forest and I  
Trekking deeper until a cool shoreline met my toes.  
From my palms, I took a sip, and as if Some potion had ignited the  
process of absorption Through my bloodstream,

Some power overcame me

Scaling boulders to their peaks—I was a leaping lioness  
Paused by a pose in sudden silence—and embrace of ego  
Orange illuminations refracted around my entire being  
The lake's surface mirrored life at large in this moment's glow  
And for one split second the world slowed Then stopped spinning.

I was locked—onto this rock—as if we had been slit apart  
thousands of years ago.

Even after all our time being worn and weathered We reunited—and  
meshed perfectly Like crystallized puzzle pieces We were one.

Sianna Sherman

## Surrender

And then comes the moment of surrender, not because it's the only thing I can do but because it's the only thing I want to do. . .

It is in this state of surrender where transformation lies and patiently waits for my arrival as a holy guest once more

Face down

bowing at your feet in full pranam

as light surrenders to dark, day to night

unabashedly

holding nothing back

There is nothing more to hold onto

My whole body weeping soaked and drenched in tears bursting at the  
seams with doubt and confusion take all of me

take me, I'm yours I must die to myself and love yet again.

Sianna Sherman



## Yogini on Fire

naked

in my truth

raw in my honesty

nothing to hide

no shame to wear

anything can happen now

in the womb of Kali



swallowed whole

undeniable power of Her swift sword

She holds me  
it's total fierce love

clear

the arrow knows the way

intrepid path

lineages of Grace

rivers of revelation

Saraswati flows



insight surges

dances

On the tip  
of the poet's tongue

on the edge of immortality

radiant

lotus rising

great ocean of compassion  
giving birth to the moonlit glow

softening my edges  
like the intimate caress of a lover  
in the middle of the night



Her lotus eyes

Lakshmi blazing

in the pure heart fire

the nectar of my soul

Sianna Sherman

Love Raid

You are Perfect

You are Grace

You are Love

Everything about you is perfection becoming more perfect There's no  
end to your perfection You Are That

You are the Great Expanse Of Perfection becoming more perfect

How can Grace fall from Grace?

You cannot fall from Grace You are Grace



Grace falls as Grace

It's too big of a burden To carry around

Thinking that you've fallen from Grace

She has not deserted you She has not cast you out You cannot catch her

She never ran away from you She is You

And when She does fall It's just like perfect ripe fruit In the flow of  
gravity Cracking open on this earth Offering nourishment to all

Amber Kilpatrick

A Walk in My Shoes

You see me as fat

I walk with the notion that one more bite will fill this emptiness inside  
me

You see me as an addict I walk with years of physical abuse that can only  
be forgotten when I swallow this pill or take that drink

You see me as a rebellious teen I walk with constant ridicule and  
rejection

You see scars

I walk with reminders of the days when no one paid attention

You see me as 'perfect'

I walk with fear of never being good enough

You see me as a Yogi I walk in constant refinement

You see.

I am.

Elizabeth Haist

## Ethos

The brown paper napkins are stacked, the wooden floor gleams and the sconces flicker.

The sun filters through the French doors with the white billows;  
cat comes in first always languid and light, while placid cows breathe  
and feel the spirals of sensation, as we descend into plank, breath lifts us  
into cobra and soon jubilant hips angle into dog. . .

gurus, prophets, sages, mystics for a moment, we climb into warriors,  
letting go of all the doing, dropping it softly as knees fall into child's  
pose, sillystupid at our best with our applesauce crossed legs holding  
hula hoops under our arms,

our shoulders melting like vegan butter— Soon the foundation of oceanic  
rhythms give way, releasing the I, the WE, and ever present me, me, me  
— Our bodies, clay pots are thrown with each breath, glazed with each  
movement, ready as the heat rises, we glisten with each new firing,  
as our vessels' impurities bead and drop, we leave, we grow into  
good enough mothers,

compassionate enough fathers,

smart enough sisters and strong enough brothers.

Taller, we begin again. . .

ready to share a little more,

ready to fight a little less.

Ashley Sky Litecky

Waves of Surrender

It is never as expected this breath

that movement

something that awakens the underlying current that rocks my soul, my bones, my child-seeds and brings my attention to a peak from which I can see the stars, the rivers, and the darkness.

There is a symphony that plays within our bodies Igniting the particles around me and sparking the light within you.



The stars join in  
playing their instruments and the music is heard in the still spaces  
between the Beatles and the foot traffic below.

It is never as expected the student finding the teacher The teacher bowing  
to become the student

The universe exhaling to remind us

that it is

okay  
to let go.

Brittany Policastro

## Full Cambodia Bellies

Your lips part gently, revealing surprisingly white teeth.

I scoop a heap of white rice as my eyes recognize the tiny black specks sprinkled through as the aftermath of a hungry mouse's feast.

Guilt pinches the passage in which my breath flows causing an unfamiliar gasp,

but your eyes remain bright as the sun that drenches the longing earth.

The sounds of your slurping ring appreciation through the polluted air and for a moment it feels clean.

You feel clean,

despite the immortal dirt embedded in your cuticles reminding me of how those little fingers once scavenged for recyclables in football fields of people's unwanted particles.

And for a moment a wave of grace fills my lungs as I swallow the beauty before me.

How your light was never dimmed baffles me but I then remember love can thrive in even the dirtiest conditions.

Even in piles of trash.

Even in piles of hate.

Even in piles of Genocide.

Love can exist like the lone lotus in the wretched filth infested swamp.

With no effort.

With no pain.

It simply thrives.

You finish your soupy rice concoction as your belly resonates a satiated glow and I know you are fulfilled.

Brittany Policastro

## Sweet India

I long to take sweet breaths of wisdom, masked by the funk of dirt roads paved with cow manure.

If I get still enough I can smell it,  
despite the fact that I am half way across the world.

It followed me lovingly as I traveled your earth, embedded with tracks of many footprints searching.

They are always searching.

I want to desperately feel the heat of your sun scorch the accidentally exposed strip of skin on my embarrassed shoulder.

I want to feel the splatters of mud slap my calf as it is flung from my flip flops.

But I am afraid.

For if I leave the neatly nestled confines of my country in search of a truth I can so easily see when I am feet away from the majesty of the Himalayas, plunging my toes in the courage of the Ganga, I know I may never return.

But then I remember what you helped to reveal is neatly nestled in the meadows and fields of my heart, embedded in the clouds and oceans that are my soul.

It is the very fabric of my breath  
and the vision I see when my eyes are clear.

And I can feel that anywhere.

But with your help it surely is the greatest

But with your help it surely is the sweetest.

Linda Caldwell Lee

## Equinox

Moons take our measure, suns pour over, tides flow within, air moves  
through—

sometimes we fall,

sometimes fly,

sometimes are hollow,

sometimes fill our skins.

No one can say which is the birthing day or name the day of our dying  
when the sky is a door, open.

Climbing Poetree

Awaken

I.

We are in the wake of a great shifting,



awaken

II.

You better free your mind before they legalize thought  
there's a war going on  
the first casualty was truth and it's inside you

the universe is counting on our belief that faith is more powerful than  
fear and that in this shifting moment we'll all remember why we're here

III.

Because

Love is God

and God is Truth

and Truth is You

and You are Me

and I am Everything  
and Everything is Nothing and Nothing is the Birthplace of Creation and  
transformation is possible and you are proof

and the most powerful tool in the hands of the oppressor is what's inside  
our heads and the most dangerous weapon to combat the deception lives  
inside our chests hold a mirror to your heart what does it reflect?  
what will be the message of the legacy we've left?

IV.

We were born right now for a reason we can be whatever we give  
ourselves the power to be  
and right now we need dream-weavers, bridge-builders, truth-sayers,  
light-bearers, food-growers, wound-healers, trail-blazers, life-lovers,  
peace-makers  
give what you most deeply desire to give every moment you are choosing  
to live or are you waiting

why would a flower hesitate to open?  
now is the only moment rain drop let go

become the ocean

possibility is as wide as the space we create to hold it

V.

the stars have spent lifetimes trying to reach us with the message that our  
light can inspire solar systems if we let it shine like the moon's reflection  
of her suns and daughters great great great grandmothers and fathers  
foretold this time of great blessing and slaughter when we'd decide  
between drought and drowning in water  
or rising like mist from toxic streams with dreams of becoming rainwater  
that falls pure to the earth to quench the thirst we'd forgotten was the  
reason we struggle in this web that we're caught in



is not a trap

but an intricate pattern like a labyrinth, a snowflake or crystal of water

or the concentric rings of a tree that still makes a sound long after its  
fallen in a forest that lived even if no one saw it and fed the world its  
breath whether or not we applauded one hand clapping sounds a lot like  
the rhythm we lost in generations who sang even as they departed

we paved concrete  
over the pores of the earth to make our lives harder and built buildings to  
scrape skies trying to get closer to God but moved farther  
from the source that birthed the first light in the darkness  
we stole from our mother and we continue to rob her for diamonds and  
gold and our ancestors' bones disappeared from their coffins

turned hollow

so they could fly  
with the weight of the fodder on her wings she has dust inside her brain  
and got caught up  
thinking pain was her fate but this is what you said that you wanted  
whether we knew it or not the universe responded to every vision and  
image and nightmare we've thought of  
our words are like bullets and we call the shots by their names  
and they come running with gifts in their pockets  
impressions of lessons of the stories

life taught us

that our dreams are impossible so we keep them in closets and now we

stand at the doorway

in the hallway life brought us

to this cross roads  
of lost hope and undeniable promise where we choose between paths  
beyond rightness or wrongness that will lead to the brink of the planet's  
exhaustion or the age of compassion where the meek become strongest  
and reinherit the earth and redefine progress

VI.

don't be scared of the spark in the spell of great darkness or afraid of the  
light in the moment of dawning or the heights you will reach when you  
rise to your calling and release all your rain call it flying

or falling

let go of your wanting and give into your longing to live free of  
possessions and full of belonging to the intricate infinity we're all a part  
of

the web that you wove in a dream you'd forgotten was the Creator  
awaking into your conscious

condensation of vapor into a droplet of water

D. Riley Boesch

## Bloom

Never forget that you longed for this.

Even as you begin to complicate your contemplations, considering the many sub-standard sensations existence tends to thrust upon one in those withering, early hours of the morn'

when even Marigolds, amidst the overwhelming fields of Springtime's fingerpaints, occasionally entertain the notion of "calling in sick", yet somehow



still manage

to rise to the occasion and bloom.

Terence Olliviera

Love

All love in compassion

All compassion in understanding

All understanding in letting go

All letting go in love

Paula Hayes

## Karma Yoga

i must learn to give myself away

as effortlessly as the wind blows across the reeds or as carefree as  
dandelions lose their parts to the soft gentle tearing of those gathering in  
the crisp white-yellow fields

if i act, it must be for the good of others not the intention of recognition  
or the glorification of self

if i move, it must be to become the swift feet of others not to climb the  
self-deluded ladder of success

if i believe, it must be to have faith to meditate upon God and what is  
good

if i am to question, it must be to ask how can i help

if i think, it must be to think of others, not to think of myself

if i am to be at all

it is to be for you

Paula Hayes

## Relinquishment

If all this plenty my eyes survey shall pass away  
The tribes and familial  
bonds too, Little ones running in the sand boxes,  
And lunches packed,  
If in some other life I will forget this broken bread?

If I forget my tears shed, and my broken heart,  
Or the Thanksgiving Day  
dinners, Or walking hand in hand,  
If in my age as my eyes start to snap shut  
Like unpolished oyster shells

And I am left open and alone,  
And not I, even I, will remain upon this earth  
Except in spirit and bones,

Love between husband and wife will extinguish  
Beneath the big moon's  
rising and setting  
Against the ocean waves,

What stays, my dear,  
What is the word forever for?

Mical Akullian

The Idea I Used to Believe In

This morning has that certain texture.

The kind where everything Belongs

The only thing out of place now Would be the idea I used to believe in

The one that goes:

I know that formula  
for making everything belong, I've seen it used a hundred times  
Too bad it doesn't work that way  
This morning is more like pouring infinity Into a paper cup

Spilling everywhere,  
Knocking over everything  
The whole time laughing At this most beautiful Intoxicating mess

Dana Tarasavage

*Waterasana*

I am liquid



hips pouring

a fluid spine

while shoulders

cascade down

a flowing waterfall

this buoyant body's

carving canyons

etching out my history

in suppicate sandstone



mellifluous sounds resonate

from this splashing

two arms trickle

towards the earth

out of a pool of muscle, bone

as my ocean of breath, dulcet

laps at the shores of simple

consciousness

Dana Tarasavage

## A Modern Devotion

Circumnavigating mountains, we're the knees of pilgrims.

Bent.

Prostrate.

Kiss the gravel and forget you know my name because,  
You are my name.

Feel the crease the back of the knee, aching tendons stuck in a quicksand  
spiral a temporary insanity stretch towards the divine.  
Polar caps and opposites attract.

We lay our palms.

Allow fingerprints to caress the earth with our identity Become the soil  
as flecks Of our skin join specks of our dirt.

Light at the end of the horizon Lingers on forehead reminding  
the final part of our period of time is just ash trays and coffee grinds.

A lifetime of: inhaling burnt tobacco and  
ingesting burnt beans A spine curls into dust.

Supple.

As we always knew we were intended to be.

And so, we go.

Our footsteps arching pathways tread towards center, we flow

As a Core,

Heart,

Mind's eye blinks

A flutter in the flame like tissue paper candles quiver

A flutter in the name like tissue paper candies quiver  
You lag behind.  
Slumped shoulders tell your story You place your blame.  
A golden star sticker upon my chest, Scarlet A You place me.  
Our journey.  
Twisting the Mason jar's lid. . .sealed.

Away.

We've floated here before So the instinct says.

## Desire

I was born searching for memories  
As an experience desires to be remembered  
As a song desires to be heard

HawaH



Doug Swenson

I Am Here For You  
Always—I am here for you

Escape your busy life

Don't talk. . just join me Savor my understanding, and my love

Arouse your senses

Taste the fruit of my alluring gift Or indulge completely

In the vast orchard, of life's sacred passion

Smell the blossoms of desire Be with me—feel what is in your heart You  
are not that busy. . .

You are never—too busy for me

Come with me, pick the whole fruit And sit under the tree of life

Surrender completely

As love, is well spent with me

Tomorrow is too late  
I will be gone!

Always I am here for you. . .  
Yet sadly, always I must leave Eternity—is the time we spend together  
Forever and always. . .I am here for you This moment loves you!

Doug Swenson

## You Will Find It

Beyond the teasing minds—of yesterday's faults Beyond the purity of  
tomorrow's reflection

Beyond the rain—that has not yet fallen Beyond the fluffy clouds, still  
sleeping in the ocean

Beyond the future dreams—of a distant society Beyond this mirage of  
creation

Find the dawn of energy. . .

waiting patiently for you to awake Limits are only—for those who  
believe

Doug Swenson

Tell Me How

I am not impressed

With the type of car you drive

Tell me how you. . .

Roll on your own two feet

I am not impressed

With how much money you have

Tell me how you. . .



Find riches in simplicity

I am not impressed

With your popular friends and spouse

Tell me how you. . .

Have your own game too

I am not impressed

With your cool—exclusive groups

Tell me how you. . .

Stand alone, as spirit of conviction

I am not impressed

With your trophy, stuffed animals

Tell me how you. . .

Find strength in preservation of life

I am not impressed

With your fancy commercial foods

Tell me how you. . .

Find heaven in a leaf of kale

I am not impressed

With polished words and stylish clothes

Tell me how you. . .

See beauty in the heart and soul

I am not impressed With your political party

Tell me how you. . .

Resist team play and peer pressure



I am not impressed

With your boxed religious speeches

Tell me how you. . .

See all ways, as different paths up the mountain

I am not impressed

With your degrees and education

Tell me how you. . .

Learned from oceans and mountains

I am not impressed

With what you think you know

Tell me how you. . .

Aspire to learn from others

I am not impressed



With your number of lovers

Tell me how you. . .

Hug the homeless and love kindness

I am not impressed. . .

With most of the usual things

Tell me how you. . .

Ride rainbows and water dreams

Tell me how you. . .

Stay Human

Please do.

Scooter Cascadia

## Restoration

There was a moment in the parking lot after no-breath-chest-jammed  
conniption in a grey cubicle farm. My friend thought I was dying. She  
said women have different symptoms for heart  
attacks.

Later, the Iyengar physical therapist taught me with a simple bolster on  
the smooth flat coolness of the floor how to open my heart.

Restoration

came  
in waves.

They say the heart's our center, our portal down into the core of the planet. I had been running so long, full out, angry, it took an inner earthquake to shake me down past the lines of fault to the sweet, round curve of the planet. Now I am nestled and stretched on the wake of her, arms out flying into spaces so wide and even.

This is the generous breath now, in the core of me, a tender touch, still and curving,  
open and spacious:  
planetary restoration.

Eva Kroes

Solidify Before You Fly

Seriously,

Unraveling this mystery of me Is a truthful undertaking Rising to my root

To travel the core beyond my creation

Nothing to lose but the way that I was Lying dead on the road ahead

Symbolically—ironically I seem a renegade rafter In a time long last and

before

Cutting between



The self sovereign

And the self less necessity

Tasting my tongue still to touch on the tissues of matter Solidify before I  
fly

Rooting to rise

To ripen before

I fall

Becoming the seed of life sustaining it all

Sherry Sadoff Hanck

## In the Moment

laughter and love

love and laughter

if that is your NOW

who cares what comes after

Cosetta Romani

Today's Special

MENU:

Down economies

## Wars and Recessions



Environmental disasters

Global injustice

Uncertain future

Human minds busier

Preoccupied with

## Devastation or Preservation

Nonetheless

Today's special is:

An unblemished sky  
Hosting a golden light ball of



Rounded perfection

Its stillness a

Dynamic reflection

Served on a dancing ocean

Waves born and die  
Piano, crescendo, forte

Crushing refrains of water

Meeting the earth.

Jack Harrison

## A Limerick on Non-Attachment

There was a young man from Rathmines  
Who thought Limericks should have just two lines

Chelsea Edgett

## Untitled

It's the dirty of first snow melting.

Dead trees that shimmer with cold manifested, Attached and holding on  
like the hair on his chest.

Log homes, layered clothes.

My things still smell of woodsmoke and wine, Scent-wrapped,

Like the heat did my body on a brown tweed couch In the basement of a  
tired town.

He held himself tightly,

And despite my mind wanting,

I didn't move to make him stop.

So he did.

That's when I found lines along muscles and shared space between  
thoughts.

That's maybe even why.

It's funny how strength and pain occupies the same, In tissue and  
backbones that carry each other.

In touching one, I felt the other.

We let go like this;

Like words on the wings of paper aeroplanes, lost in the wind.

The pages unfold to blankness, drift to settle against my skin.

I left them unwritten.

Stayed respectful of the clean unseen, At peace in the ice or the fire.

There's much to be said for the present's desire— Nothing more, nothing



less.

Although, truth be told, it was hard to go, To pass on the act of  
intervening.

So I thought of all the love I have, and sent some words to give it back,  
and sighed the happy kind for my sweet and simple life.

I'm still,

Alone,

And everything is beautiful.

Elizabeth Valerio

## Fields of Roses

In Tree Pose

I stand  
grounded, tall, secure

for you

In Toe Stand

I give my all



with full attention and will

for your peace

In Spinal Twist

my eyes turn to see

you run freely

in fields of roses

And in that last Savasana

as I close my eyes

I surrender to the silence—



the restful place of freedom

where roses bloom

Elizabeth Valerio

## Body's Melody

Every part of our body,  
An indispensable detail in our posture

Our posture, the playing of our instrument  
Its melody, the song of our inner self

Our inner self, the source of our art  
In our source, a masterpiece

Thank you, body,  
every part.

Carly Sachs

Lord of the Fishes

When does the connection between heart

and voice become solid  
yellow line, not broken, how long

have I shied away  
from the pose of the fish

or buried my voice  
in the murky pond of shame?

Midweek

Lynnette tells me after class,



Thursday used to  
be her drinking night, now  
it's her yoga night.  
How long for these shifts,

all these years  
I had lied to protect whom?  
Me, my family,  
from what. . .the fear that no one

would stop  
and listen to me, the way Matsya

hooked  
by Lord Shiva's story, stayed,

the way these brave women  
return week after week,

why did I not think  
those I loved would open their hearts  
to me,  
Or why do any of us doubt

the safe net  
of another's heart, the power  
of our own?

Carly Sachs

Drishte

This morning, rain again, all that back and forth  
The windshield wipers  
give momentary relief  
from the inevitable.

I watch the headlights on the other side  
of the divided highway,  
remembering how sometimes the other drivers  
would flick them off and on in warning

speed trap. Slow down and I can't



help but thinking  
how these small unspoken flickers  
could be like fireflies signaling their presence to each other  
and how when we were younger  
we collected them in a jar as if we couldn't see the light in our own eyes,  
like how you look at me  
when I am walking towards you in the airport,  
two blue suns, arms rays

When is something what it is and when is it something else.

Carly Sachs

## Shraddha

If nothing is yours,  
nothing can be taken from you,  
but how easy to want,  
how easy to say, mine.

How not to hold your hand, or fold my body into yours  
thinking, yes, you will always be here when earlier we had seen the dead  
trees.

An entire landscape changed, gone.  
“Pine beetles,” Flavien explains,  
“this happens every fifty years,” he says as he drives us around the  
preserve.

At Caracol Fredy tells us blue morpho butterflies are fallen warriors

returned to us  
and Mayan astrologers would count the stars

every night watching  
for new light—

an ancestor  
who finally arrived in heaven.

All the things we do to acknowledge something greater.

Our first night here

we felt our way back

through the dark to our cottage when the generator went out.

No electricity, no ancestors, only the two of us moving closer

and closer to  
what we think we know.



Bob Weisenberg

## The Meaning of Life—Who Cares?

According to the ancient Yoga sages Questioning the meaning of life

While living

Is like questioning the meaning of a roller coaster In the middle of a  
roller coaster ride.

Or, like questioning the meaning of love In the middle of lovemaking.

Who cares when something is so amazing?

The amazement IS the meaning.

The amazement IS the ultimate reality.

The amazement IS the life-force of the universe All around us and within  
us Far beyond our ability

To absorb or comprehend.

The amazement IS what some call God And the ancient sages called  
Brahman.

In the midst of the ups and downs Of life and love

Just relax, breathe deeply

And experience the infinite thrill of the amazing ride.

Bob Weisenberg

## Silence

Silence is the Roar of the Universe.

Emptiness is the Fullness of the Grand Canyon.

Nothingness is Always Abundance.

Boredom is Always an Invitation to Amazement.

Silence is the Roar of the Universe.

Bob Weisenberg

## Yoga Tennis

Yoga has transformed my tennis Like it has transformed everything else.

From the Sutra

I learned to focus on the ball With single-pointed concentration To the exclusion of all distractions.

From the Gita

I learned to play hard Like Arjuna the Warrior While detaching my ego  
from the results.

From the Upanishads

I learned cosmic exultation That all these diverse molecules Can do all these wondrous things together.

I no longer throw my racket When I miss an easy shot.

I no longer stay depressed for days After losing a tough match.

The only problem is

Today I was beaten badly Because I was distracted Writing this poem in  
my head While I played.

Fred Arcoleo

## Stillness

The more still we become  
the more we descend from our  
crystal imaginings  
our man-made mirrors  
sink into the tender  
ferocious efficiency  
of the seed

our fleshy density  
our tiny eternity  
the murmur  
underground  
pregnant to bursting

no noise  
only sound



Millicent Accardi

I Must Talk with Things Falling Away

To straighten your shoulders

In a way that rotates your arms forward Into the socket. At first it will seem as if you Are pushing out your chest in a comical Way or as if you are against the wall

Of a firing squad. Your palms will naturally Roll forward and open like a flower petal It is awkward but how things are meant to be You've grown weary, bending over, hushing At your desk. Bring the tops of your legs To attention, feel your knees as they rise Then straighten and push back your thighs As if you are holding back a tidal wave Or a mountain. Tuck your bottom under

Yourself like you aim to sit down but stop Just before making the decision to do so.

Shrug your shoulders to open up your neck Turn your chin a little upwards toward

A spot on the wall in front of you, pick A focus point to stare at but not to sink into.

Spread all ten of your toes and really let your feet Settle into the earth below as if they were Homesteading. Now rise above any poses Or postures or effort or sight or worries you May have and listen. Just listen. Be quiet And see what your body comes up with.

Millicent Accardi

### Self-Portrait with a Yoga Mat

I hide behind it, the black, thick Rubber, soaked with sweat and promise  
And intentions, the same every time I unroll It and start in on the Sun  
Salutations and the Series B routines, rituals, prayers.

I do not know who I discovered

Here on the dark

Raft in the middle of this ocean, Or even what brought me here, one  
Christmas When our niece was staying with us following Her parents'  
divorce when her father did not want Her and turned his truck away at  
the proposed Pick up time.

I looked at her brown eyes

And freckles and thought of shopping, something We both hate and then  
I smiled and said yoga And so we went.

We struggled to hear the teacher I tried not to compare it with pilates, my  
first love But eventually it came out that yoga was not even A close  
second. It was as if I had always done this Bending and stretching, as if it  
was what my body Needed to do, as it furred head-on into the crouching  
Spine of the dreaded middle ages.

Untitled

The storm is inside my mind, clouds keep coming.

Static fields dull me, electric wires are numbing.

I see the sun rising, a new dawn is here.

I see beauty,  
she's standing near.

The water will rise, I've been swimming for years.

I cleanse myself,  
with my own tears.

Debra Wallace

Lessons from my Son

I thought I knew it all

Then you were born.

You touched my soul to no end

Your cries burrowed a well

Stirred my consciousness



Awakened my humility

A collaboration of love and labor in its purest form.

I see my reflection in your brilliance and turbulence

## Opportunities to heal past wounds

Nurture vital needs

Make dreams come true.

You have so much to teach me

I am ready to learn.

Aaron Hoopes

## Too Busy to Relax

Too busy to relax they say

Complaints, excuses everyday

They sound so weak, so stressed, so tired A mundane world in which  
they're mired No time to sit and just be quiet Their mind's a rush of  
thoughts, a riot No chance they have to hear the sound Of nature's  
wonder all around

Of birds and trees and clouds and air Too much work, it's just not fair  
This really seems quite sad to me So much to do, no time to be.

Breathe I say and move a bit

Then after that we can just sit And watch the world at its own pace There  
is no rush, it's not a race And if it were, what is the goal?  
Where are you going mind, body, soul?

Too busy to relax I hear

These words seem like they're based in fear Tired, weak and too much  
stress How did our lives turn such a mess?

We don't need to look above

To find a place that's based in love Turn instead and look within

Find your self, it is no sin

Forgive, let go, open your heart It is the only place to start

Think on that and you might find Throughout your life you have been  
blind.

Breathe I say and move some more Run, walk, jump, stretch on the floor

Move your body, get up and go

Feel the energy, let it flow

Don't get caught in negative

Don't get caught in negative  
Habits that won't let you live?

Too busy to relax? Not true!

This hoax must end, it starts with you  
If all you do is just the same  
You never will escape this game  
Do something new, do something Zen  
Begin right now, not 'if' or 'when'

Do one thing different, or two, or five  
Change how you live, become  
alive  
Do or do not, there is no try

Step off the cliff and start to fly  
Begin with this, you won't go wrong  
Remember to breathe, deep and long.

Tzivia Gover

## Autobiography

A wind lifts these pages  
Carries them like a fleet of magic carpets  
Through the open window.  
You've caught one in your hand.  
Read it to me.  
Tell me who I am.

Tzivia Gover

### Crescent Moon Pose

This skin holds a universe within Worlds of star-pocked blackness,  
Darkness deeper than eternal oceans.

Between my bones, symphonies sing, Planets sigh out majestic melodies.

Every vein in me – a Rio Grande all its own.

My lungs, each one a rain forest, And in my rib cage,

The panting breath of creation, The desire to live longer than time, To  
know the secret

Wrapped in every star.

K. Balachandran Nair



Absolute

You bit on the  
tip of my nose,  
Sensuously,  
(A throw back  
to our animal past!)  
Rubbed your nose,  
On mine, giving me  
A very intimate,  
primitive, sensation.

Pecked my lips

affectionately

like a lovelorn  
female magpie,  
Seeing itself in a mirror.

Filled wine in  
your mouth,

and sloshed your

wet full lips over  
my taut male nipples.



Bit my ear lobes

till it transmitted waves  
of pleasure strikes,

sending lightening sparks

to the primordial depths  
of my Mooladhara.

Drove your cruel

long nails  
deep in to my back,  
till it drew blood.

I was with you  
all the while.  
But I wasn't  
distracted,

My tranquil mind



was in

union with the  
Absolute.

and I was possessed by  
the consciousness,  
Absolute.

And it dawned  
on me:

each one of your sensuous

touches was a

glimpse of the  
Absolute,  
though transient,

like a flash  
in the darkness.



So I hold your hands  
lovingly, in companionship,

as we complement  
each other.

Together we contemplate on  
The Sahasrarapadma.

the effulgence eternal  
that dispels all darkness.

Richard Kowal

Poem for an Opening

A yogi sees flowing water And her heart stretches open To greet this  
liquid joy

Then inwardly, she questions Shall I be flowing water Or a heart that's  
soft and moist

Suddenly she sees

That even such reverie Is too much weight to carry

So she steps away  
From all thoughts of beauty And becomes completely free  
Then, very quietly  
She enters into the whole of herself Like a breath

Chuck Miller

Untitled

Unimaginable Gifts of such vast quantity and exquisite, sublime Beauty  
Raining down upon our heads and falling into our hands.  
So much that we become numb and mistake it for Suffering.



Every sound

a signal,

NOW.

Come back to now.

Every crash of the waves, Every sigh of the wind, Bird song, leaves  
rustle.

Scratching of neighbors' feet, Rustle of cloth, Creak of chair,

It all says  
NOW.

Come Back

to the Silence. . .

Infinite Eternal Silence the origin of everything

Stay with me a little bit longer We have come this far together Hand in  
hand

two orphans

Innocent and inexperienced Caught in the role of teachers and leaders

We didn't know it was impossible So we did it.

Mark Truscott

nu-wa

a new—nu nu—nu-wa

a new day begins  
nature suck and nature splash a new dawning of a new horizon i  
breathee—you breathee—we breathee—ahhhhhh—  
vertical lines and horizontal planes princess of the sky—protector a new  
—new—wa—a nu—wa —wa shadows dance in the sunlight triangles  
float amid cubes and cones a new—new—nu —a new day dawns  
clear—air—energy bright a nu—new day—a nu—wa—wa

Stephen Mead

## Stealing Angels

This washcloth is a bunched flower  
Of cotton turning to silk by the  
dipping Under the silver faucet.

Folds of forgotten robes, Turin shrouds  
All, forms its blossoms, wet petal  
by  
Petal— Rain water holy in a basin of glass. . .

Music wells, the songs of souls, names  
In our systems, an on-call  
universe. . .

I can't remember all of them, angel  
Thief in my wordy religion, but  
The scripture's

Leaves, page after page, pours the faces  
From paint— So many bathed

Bodies, such consoling love, simple  
In this kingdom of sighing skin,  
these Cathedral cell vessels.

In the end bells & candles give permission  
And there is not at all any  
theft—

Angels of memory, known, unknown, Heaven hinting, roomfuls of views  
Through you and through you. . .

This cloth is the touch of all of that: Behold the held.

Therefore, do not be afraid

to let down your guard and relax with others.

Teach others they are not scary by not being afraid of them.

In this way, they will learn to look out from their own gentleness to the

gentleness in others.



Erich Schiffmann

## Your 1st Assignment

Willingly listen inwardly for the voice of your inner Teacher and learn, be assured, and know that you can relax inside now and rest, for you are safe and far from danger.

There is no hurry, walk easy,  
but use your time intelligently.

Eagerly want and gladly accept the inner Guide.

Desire, listen for, welcome and embrace your communion with Me.

This is what you used to refer to as “my little voice.”

This is your intuitive knowing, your contact with Me,  
and should be considered quite distinct from any feelings of guilt.

Listen to your wee little voice, and let what was temporarily smothered  
come to the surface to re-emerge with renewed strength.

Your first assignment is to discover what you want.

Clarify your deepest longings.

Clarify what's important.

Discover this for yourself by listening inwardly.

Simply become quiet and still, then gently pay attention, watch, listen, as  
your deepest motivations

float into your conscious awareness.

Erich Schiffmann

Take Another Look

One of the most important things is to clarify

to yourself  
what's important  
to you.

What are you really after?

What do you really want?

For understand, there is something that you want, something you desire  
deeply.

You are not directionless and without rudder.

But understand also,

the path you have chosen  
and the path you are walking, is the mirror image of what you think  
important.

Are you following this?

What you are doing

bears witness

to what you consider important.

In other words, if you are not sure what is important to you, look at what you are doing.

But now it is time to re-evaluate, to pause and take stock,

to take another look

and see anew  
what you really perceive as worthwhile.

Won't you do this, please?  
Then put what is important at the helm.  
Let this light your way and fuel your trip.

Only what is fully important can be fully compelling.  
And unless you are full,  
you will not experience your always-existing Fullness.

Pause again and take a look.  
What are you really after?  
What do you desire above all else?  
Look deeply, feel deeply, sense inwardly into yourself. . .  
and do not be afraid to be absolutely beautifully honest.



Katie Capano

## Desert Dance

Trees dancing in the distance like lovers reunited leaves wisps of hair  
keeping tempo moonlight glitters in silver pools of collected rain  
reflecting a pale moon behind hazy clouds electric eel snaps along the  
horizon illuminating the night in red dust quickly gone, returned to black  
awaiting the growl of mother earth as her children return to her womb  
showering us with cool kisses  
while earth bleeds green from brown veins recycling her generous bounty  
once again

Katie Capano

A Love Song

Your voice

Soothes honey on a cold winter day Raspy and Rich Fills  
empty space with starry nights

Your touch

Envelops me in love, healing from within Soft and Strong

Opening locked doors without a key

This love

Eases its way past all my borders Beckoning and Beautiful

I'm both lost and found.

Fidessa Docters van Leeuwen

Silence

Are you whispering?

Within me.

O my dearest,  
there you are again!

Verusca Costenaro

## Ode to Your Loving Nature

Silky daisies, and lilies, and orchids caressing the veil of your silvery hair, like waterfalls from the sky— and resting on the sweetness of your womb.

Mother Nature is waiting for your graceful foot to touch the ground.

You open your measured dance on the whispering grass, and squirrels and trees rejoice at the melody of your wise steps.

You are floating in space and time,  
on the silent wings of a newborn butterfly, speaking words of kindness to a restless World.

Your eyes are bathed in the fiery light of Life, and your humane prayers are murmured to the clouds.

You're the Mother of the Sun.

You are precious.

You are Love.

# Freedom

The past is frozen

The future is melting

The present is weather

HawaH



Joseph Goldstein

Who Am I?

A winter walk  
in New England—  
icy wind:  
Stepping into my thoughts  
I dream myself  
into existence.

Jody Vaughn Lawrence

## Love Cycle

Flowing from the earth, Ever endlessly, We are a cycle of death And  
rebirth.

You are the ocean, And I rejoice, In joining your horizon.

The dark skies behind my eyes Suddenly seem closer, And shine,  
Lighting up my mind.

From you I soar, And into you I fall, Helping you design the shores And  
bedrocks,  
Of our ever-changing, immortal Existence.

Amelia Kelley

### Simple Request

Pointed ends of feather spines Mark each bone and muscle of mine I dig  
my teeth in scornfully, but they disregard my effort The edges spread like  
drenching ink Converging into a puzzled maze

I surrender with my palms turned in acceptance Before the mirror  
The reflection of my skin is drenched by hateful ink Turning my white  
feathers to black My eyes focus inside themselves. . .

I nod

I have been here before and I understand this quest To shed my feathers  
light enough to fly One simple form of prayer

Deep inside the privacy of my hollow chest Socializing with the edges of  
pink lungs That expand, consuming peace

This, like many other melodious moments won't last forever Recess,  
respire, freeing venom from the tip Of the snake's tongue

God help me pray more acutely

On the stones in your rivers

And the grass of your fields

Where I spun with barefooted toes and outstretched hands The sun  
melting my face into submissive joy That could not be filled or defined  
otherwise Violins sing painfully

The blue befits deepness and the air is intoxicated With intensity too rich  
for me to bear without crying I groom my feathers with humble breaths  
of love And leave the wicked edges outside.

Lynn Brandli

## Attachment

Your physical body left so quickly I am not prepared

This was not my plan I cannot let you leave

My inner voice asks for help in the solace of my poses Explore the  
ancient ways I study and I teach

The pain does not ease Inner God and Wise Woman do not impart  
guidance I am left to sit in vast emptiness, the deepest sadness I have  
ever met

The sorrow weighted

With many lifetimes and many loved ones

Time passes

Tears are less and then more I sit now and reflect Those fleeting  
moments of your physical body's death

The pain has transformed My soul is fed by the life you divined I am  
nourished

I am thankful

My heart feels broad and wide Immense as the ocean, sky, land I feel a  
light in each of my cells I see the spread beyond physical boundaries



Our souls

And the thin veil between us

Mary Ivancic

Untitled

body bends  
and opens.  
soft flow of ocean  
floods  
my heart.  
once rigid  
boundaries  
becoming permeable.  
mind witness  
to the  
transformation  
on the mat.

Bernadette Barnes

Evolution

sometimes in life

there is a pain

that runs so deep

winds so tightly

about the heart

that it is no longer pain an ache that seeps into the core of the soul

anguish that throbs and beats in rhythm with the pulse

pain that burns away fear purges past passions and erases memory

deeper and deeper it flows becoming part of the blood burrowing into the

bones until it is all that remains pain like that changes becomes

something else develops a sort of beauty evolves into a type of joy

consumes all else

and becomes a driving force a reason to draw the next breath and the next

and the next in the blind hope



that this breath

will be the one

when the pain ends

Rossana Favero-Karunaratna

## Inner Encounter

My mantras were released

they flew towards eternity

Their spell will finally break somewhere in time.

I search to be one  
in another space,



another time

where love will defy  
the pain of an inner distance.

My body claims this place

But my soul will escape  
And that will be my last rebellion  
against karma.

Words like cryptogams

come to me again

The truth lies

in front of me



while

I am no longer here.

It takes no time to realize

That this absence does not cover

any space

any measure of time

or eternity

Defiant me

here

Uncontrollable me

there

My inner encounter awaits.



Michael Stone

Matters

in the middle the only thing

important is

in the end

in the beginning

the only thing  
in the middle the only thing really

in the middle

in the start



and in the middle the

only thing

important  
is the tenderness.

nothing matters  
in the end but the tenderness

the affection

in the middle

rough in the raw

in the middle

it's the affection



the indiscriminate

the case of

the ending

the love without brackets

the end of the start

and in the middle

the only

thing is the tenderness



the affection

the navel

the heart

the beginning

is always all beginning

with ending

in the middle

when you end in the middle

you begin



and begin tenderness

in the end

the only thing ending

is this

Michael Stone

## Don't Change

For my friends. We practice cooking and we practice mind dancing. We practice practices privately. Relationships roll across the floor.

We have as our guides train tracks alongside highways incurvate lakesides frozen spring.

Things running next to one another.

Lapping. KING and QUEEN intersect here and nowhere else do they curl into one another like so many humming sections intersections divorce. It never crossed my mind when you touched my nipples that you left the realm of love.

Passengers on humming rails swans sleeping ice flows. DON'T CHANGE posted everywhere lanes change.

Karen Buckland

## Words

What are words?

A half way house?

An attempt at expression?

Attempt only

Half only

Yet behind the words

The powerful stuff

Bright shining meaning

Everythingness

Nothingness

For ever and ever

Without the words

Still light and bright

Always

And so sometimes

Rest in

No words.

Lilias Folan

## Untitled

I often sleepwalk through life  
eyes open  
besodden in that moment  
between light and dark  
hard edge and softness  
springtime and summer  
The Pause Between breaths  
Held there, captive, hovering  
Dying to be awake.

Valini Pundit

## Silent Surrender

In the silence of the night, when the inner quiet reflects the outer calm, I  
converse with God.

In total surrender,  
my heart breaks open.

As the last drops of Maya flow out, joy finds room to enter.  
It spreads like the dawning sunrise creeping into every inch of a hallowed  
cave, and we speak with one voice.



Rama Devi

Divine Signature

love dances inside  
every single atom  
divine signature

Jana Dvorska

One Love

Come into the light

Hold each other's hearts Keep a tranquil mind

Full of hope and serenity Believe anything is possible Imagine yourself  
where you want to be It will become reality

Limitless imagination will change the world Set your intention and  
accomplish Believe it and you will live it Come together

Unite as one love

The universe is infinite unity Universal is love

Be love

Feel love within your entire being Let it radiate out into the world Touch everyone you meet with your light and love

Rachel Zinman

## Between Words

this is not a poem of love  
poems are for poets  
and love  
is what lives between the words

Douglas Brooks

Soma from Angirasa

Sacred for its edge, soft in heart There is nothing to achieve, less to need.

Rising with the falling breath,

whirling in the stillness of intoxication, Soma drenches this soul and that  
light of heaven inside, And you, you are that moon inside this heart.

She rises and falls in the sky, full tonight for Soma, Full tonight as you,  
in me.

Douglas Brooks

### The Power of the Heart's Longing

I dreamt of her, lives before we met, By seeing others that we are not,  
Recognizing ourselves again, we know how spring rain leaves leaves in  
wet grass, Where hearts ache for parting and this dream a secret, but not  
to her. She knows what I know.



Jean-Jacques Gabriel

## Asanas After Troy

Anger. Tears. and a fleeting desire for violence disrupt a dreamer's  
dream  
of race-less love in world without lynching.

certain moments stoke outrage-fueled flames, exciting  
anger—our sense of self's immune system.  
certain moments remind me that we fine folk are born  
with holes in hearts, yearning for forever.

forever seems most pleased by a reflection ever-changing so, some ill-  
aim with silly ideas  
that more matter alone will quench cosmic thirst.  
some pillage earth, rape women, slaughter men, kill feral folk and fauna,  
and disown many other beauties.

in moments like this,

i overlook spirit's possible possession of us.

i overlook what futures beautiful histories allude to.

i overlook the dreamer's dream

of race-less love in world without lynching  
but the ritualized returning of awareness to intention, feeds and revives  
my well-aligned aim.

With this focus, i stoke the burning fire within, sparking multiple mini-  
armageddons, cleansing me, cleansing us, of enshrined criminality, foul  
histories, unlove, and silly ways, becoming better within, and without.

well postured for living the dreamer's dream  
of race-less love in world without lynching.

*The state of Georgia executed Troy Davis on September 21, 2011 despite serious doubts about his guilt, police intimidation of witnesses, Davis's steadfast profession of innocence, and a complete lack of physical evidence.*

Jean-Jacques Gabriel

## Notes Throughout a Day

::7:42am::

morning stillness makes space for sweet songs morning movement lends  
grace to the mixings of magic and muscle

morning presence massages soils planted with love seeds, and nursed with  
sweet toils.

::11:37am::

at the meeting

of pockets of eternity  
and the beauties of biology, i find a tender reverence.

::2:10pm::

i soak in sun

and awaken muscle

i dig roots deep down  
into the rockbed of love and i bloom beauty and laughter echoing  
hereafter. . .

::11:07pm:: i let go and whisper sparkle black incantations transfixing  
through tough tongue spells and deep drinks in god's great well.  
i coax dreams of an ancient love, and mistle-toed teeth.  
dreams of spirit animals and peanut butter.  
dreams of soon-to-be us-histories aware of the unseen.  
i let go to the free frolics in eyelid land, swirling in the redness of closed-  
eye sight. . .

::3:42am::  
a cosmonaut of consciousness, i am buoyed by energies both below and  
above, a fine vessel i float on warm lakes of love.



Cleveland McLemore

This Burden

I did not ask for this burden when one becomes two In a moment

everything changes

that is when a teacher is needed

—chop wood carry water—

this is only the beginning As the old Shaman will tell his apprentice

“I am sorry that you have become enlightened,

Now get back to work”

Waking up is nothing living free and undetected in a world without  
vision that is the challenge

How do you speak a language that has no words?

John V. Love

Letter from a Secret Admirer

Don't torment yourself with uncertainty— I hear your every word to me,  
your every frustration,  
your every impassioned cry for a way out of your confusion.

I watch you forgive

the same people

again and again.

And you ask for my forgiveness, too, for what you call, “turning your back on me.”

But I assure you, my precious, no forgiveness is necessary.

All those years you lashed out at the world, I kept watch over you, never stopped loving you, never stopped rooting for you.

It’s not easy seeing someone suffer so.

It takes as much courage and faith as the one who chose to suffer.

For you see, my child, this is what you asked for, and I granted, because I, too, wanted to see you grow.

I—even more than you—

wanted to see you transcend your cherished fallacy that life is a tragedy.

I—even more than you—

wanted to see you triumph over the challenges you face.

Please don’t doubt that I hear your prayers.

In my silence

is my undying desire

for you to hold out your hand and invite me to dance.

For you see, my love, I—even more than you— long for *your* embrace.

Justin Marx

## Melting into the One

we are all melting into one another like a popsicle in the Sun— it is  
messy

it is fragrant and full of color— enjoy it as a Child would!

do not grab a napkin or clean

do not worry about the result but be in the moment tasting the fruits of  
Life



Justin Marx

The Mystics Drink Tea  
The mystics were never mystics.

They were so very practical  
And also difficult.

Who wants to be bothered with worldly things.  
Not I.

I want to drink the nectar of God  
And here on Earth this tea.

It is a ceremony and a dialogue Even for the mystic who does not speak  
Much at all. With the taste of it Divine Mother fills the throat And there  
is much to be said

of what is important. Often people speak of nothing. This is fine.  
People should speak more often  
of the unfurling flower. Look into your lover's eye and you will see it.

Gracy Obuchowicz

## The Lovers' Manifesto

we are lovers and dreamers because we become like water in the constant pursuit of moving and shaking what the universe has bestowed upon us in its perfect diction of Saturday afternoon picnics.

we refuse to stagnate, withdraw, give-up, escape for more than a few hours at a time.

we see life for the process and have always loved happiness for its sexy elusiveness.

in turn, we have learned to love

her twin sister of heartbreak  
and how it comes to leave us a different person, knowing more about  
beauty and kindness than we thought possible.

we believe in:

dancing as prayer, chewing slowly, asking questions and listening to the  
answers, impromptu morning mass on deserted mountain tops, delirious  
gratitude, homemade bread, riveting conversation, and cups of tea when  
the moment requires rest.

we are not afraid of change,  
our bodies, getting older, technology, confusion, bursts of anger, or the  
elusiveness of everything we seek.

we have learned to sit still  
to see that which reaches beyond us and connects every single part of this  
world.

by seeing the connection,  
we finally know there is no more need to fight.

we are fed by each other, lessons learned, childrens' sticky faces, treetops  
waving in the breeze, and above all, the love that loves to love us.

we tough it out, we change, and we will change this world through  
consideration,

compost piles of ideas,

and a willingness to laugh in the face of anything that seems too big, too  
closed, or too difficult.

we make loving look good.

Sue Cook

## Moments

There have been a hundred thousand moments  
since we last spoke.

Across the world,  
each moment has contained a million memories.

Each one,  
for me,  
has contained a thought of you.

Nalini Davison

## Seeking You

Is my heart crying out in pain or softly singing your name?

Are my fingers stiff and slick with unwelcome cold and rain or wetted by drops of your grace?

Is my intrusive loneliness and craving for human comfort demanding that  
I board the busload of crowded bodies  
or whispering a secret  
I can find you deeply deeply hidden

within the cave  
of my own heart.

My face, reflected  
in the mirror of time insults me with the indelicacy of aging  
Will I be able to outrun the racing hours and days to fall into your arms  
before the flesh crumbles and I am thrown onto the wheel of revolving  
lifetimes?

Jon Barrows

## The Inward Journey

Walking the mandala of the mind,  
the inward spiral, the shadowed depths,  
each step closer to the darkness's center  
is a step closer to the lightened edge.



Julie Peters

## Dermatographica

I can draw with dry fingernails lines on my skin, red welts that rise up on my forearms my skin remembers touch by the way it chafes I can trace dry fingernails over goosebumps on my calves and tell stories about this sick superpower and its beautiful Latin name

*dermatographica*

skin writing

I have spent afternoons drawing names beneath itchy sweaters when I  
remember I add details

cities

favourite books

profiles looking out of windows, unmade beds

I have been carving out pounds of sacred flesh, each marked with a name and a portrait in perfect inflammation I have been wrapping them in packages then placing them in mailboxes next to empty milk bottles and flyers for takeout Chinese

I have wondered if they were opened like gifts if these lonely dermal stories were left out on kitchen counters, framed in bedrooms, cooked and eaten.

I have wondered if these bits of flesh reminded them of me.

I was asked to perform this feat once, by two doctors, men, they crossed their arms, laughed, glanced at each other I want to believe they felt awe I want to believe they would have liked to have seen their own names “Dr.” neatly dotted on the hip crest before the name along the thigh I carved them out pieces, small gifts, a line of hamstring and one tensor fascia latae

but I didn’t remember their names.

I wrote “Doctor” on both packages, wrapped them carefully, left them side by side on the examination table.

I have given these pounds of flesh freely these perfect gifts, each branded and sent away

Because I wanted to see my ribcage, the delicate curve of my collarbone I’ve wanted to see the ridges of my spinal column the apertures of my sacrum

tendons peeling away from my kneecap like a careful hand

I’ve always wondered if my bones have scars if they have writing on them

I've wanted to know whose name was etched on my skeleton  
beneath all the moveable flesh I have hoped

it was mine

Abby Lorenz

## She Walks in Two Worlds

She walks in two worlds That become one

At the zipper toothed seam Where her toes meet the earth The soles of  
her feet Thumping out the beat Of drums that have been pounding Steady  
like her heart For millennia

Her hips sway in time with the ocean tides Constantly bringing to shore  
The sea foam of her desire Playing cradle to her abdomen Filled with  
hope

For love and the eternity Of creation

Her deepest longing To be the zero point of life The nest out of which fly  
A thousand generations of untethered souls All calling her

Mother



Matriarch

Ancestor

## Myth

Her chest blooms with milky white lilies Blossoming out in Fibonacci  
sequences From the blush pink center Providing nectar  
For bees and butterflies Lovers and hummingbirds Seeking sweet  
nourishment From the heart Her neck and shoulders Create a soft landing  
place For weary heads  
Concentrating the scent Of amber and rose  
That transmutes her soul Into a sweet smelling offering To the Gods  
Lips that hold secrets Too big and beautiful For the world to handle  
Right now  
Speak bold pronouncements Of the explosion to come Her hair  
Thick, flowing waves Of intricately spun gold Thinly veil her crown A  
lotus blossom  
Spiraling out into the unknown known She walks in two worlds That  
become one  
At the infinitesimally small point Where her head meets the sky

Abby Lorenz

Untitled

There is something inside me That sees you

And remembers

A lifetime

When you were my brother My father

My lover

My friend



And I wonder

What I forgot in that lifetime That you are here to teach me again And I wonder

What I forgot in that lifetime That needs to be remembered So I look again And I search your eyes For the answer Because maybe that answer Is the key to it all The lesson I need To reach nirvana The roadmap to heaven I wait

I wonder

I hope you will reveal it soon So that I can memorize Every moment  
And hold the secret in my heart Until the next lifetime When the me that  
is me Will see the you that is you And I will pray to the stars To let me  
forget again

Utamu Onaje

## The Elevator

the door that  
almost closed  
was opened.

will the door  
that did close  
open again?

Utamu Onaje

Evocation

in the abyss

of the lack of

understanding



that often

masquerades  
as truth,

may we the  
evolving,

living

among we the  
dead and dying,

mesmerized

by the illusion of  
power and control &

blind acceptance of



value systems

birthing our current

state of bondage  
recall!

may we the  
pre-conscious

bond

with we the  
un-conscious

in this the

age of



grace and  
In-light-enment

remembering

who we were

and who we  
in fact, still are.

Patricia Busbee

Shakti Breath

I return to the mat  
a place of refuge.

My body an altar,  
an offering to Shakti.

Some days I struggle to do the warm-ups.

I avoid all the slim bodies on the cover of the yoga books and tapes, the ones that are twisted up like pretzels, their smile exudes peace and joy.

As if they came into this world like clay—moldable with ease of movement—swan-like grace.

I am frustrated by the measuring stick inside my head and their looks that say I must spend lifetimes trying to puzzle out the keys to health and happiness.

Why is my karma different?

I wear my weight like a neon sign yet, I feel pulled to connect to my breath— that column of eternal light that Shakti rides up and down my spine seeking her mate at my crown.

I can't always touch my own inner beauty, or my toes,  
but if I stay with my breath my body loosens just enough to go a little further than I did yesterday.

de Vie Weinstock

The Door to Nothingness

No one can do this work for you.

The work of Breathing.

The work of Letting Go.

No one can take away your Self for you— That heavy Self of infinite burden.

No one can do this work for you.

The work of Silence.

Only you can open this Singular Door to Nothingness Where stark colorless pervasive wind blows, Where there exists only One Solitary Knowing.

And in that paradoxically unconfined room Of One Choice—One Choice Alone— There is, curiously enough, freedom

Singing,

Silent,

Totally silent,

No choice,

One total omnipresent choice,

come home.

de Vie Weinstock

## The Yoga Teacher

The time is now.

It has always been now, but now It is now more than ever.

I do not know you.

The silence that sits between us Is very thick and full As if it's more real  
than any utterance We sort of make, like Two really old people Or two  
quite young people, One or the other,

But we're not adults here, we're Lost aged masters or  
Clumsy foolish adolescents.

I do not know you.

I do not know your story.

I do not know the channels Your mind and heart swim.



But I watch you move

I sense you being  
I hear you speak.

I am old, I am young  
I know too much, I don't know anything I've got a hundred stories, I've  
got none And maybe you're just another one— Another one of those  
hundred stories— Those flames that swear to fade with time.

Hope seems like a lost cause Hope seems like gambling in Vegas But  
I've never been to Vegas Let's drive there  
Take a road trip together We'll take the silence with us That rich full  
thick silence It'll keep us company While we forget who we ever thought  
we were While we dig into each other's fires Listening for that sudden  
yet Anticipated

Moment

When

Everything

Drops

Sharon Gannon

## Transcendence

Transcendence is an apocalyptic event It takes the past as it leaves the present Change is always the same If you care to look deeper into it It is form passing into form It is orgasmic

It is the expansion of truth and reality Through the phases of duality Like the moon it moves from necessity Guaranteed full promised monthly

This is bold like love is bold Naked revealed

It has no body and nobody can have it Love that is. . .has no body and no body has love

Love is the body

Blood, the intoxication the invitation To this apocalypse



This standing naked

Psyche stripped is the flesh The matter is the mind Thought is form

Words come next

Few make new most make do.

Sharon Gannon

## Shut Up and Listen

Only these few words to describe all of this Hardly does it seem fair  
More likely it appears arrogant for one person To speak so many millions  
of words in a lifetime Saying this or that about this and that It hardly  
seems fair To say anything  
To describe what can be seen with even the Most enchanting schemes of  
words Is barely enough

And yet

We think we have seen it all and can tell it Like it is or was

But all we are doing is showing a small corner Of a shadow of it and  
even that is a lie Truth is immense

It is larger than the universe Words wiggle out of minds filled with  
images Linked together as a sequence of events in time We cannot know  
what we are talking about Until we are willing to stop talking And break  
out of our small corner to reach For possibilities that cannot be described  
How to do that is to enter the mystical land of Shut up and listen

Sharon Gannon

## The Silence of Us All

There are 7 billion human beings on the planet they say Each one going about their business While 150 million land animals are put to death every day Making 56 billion a year can you spin it?

## **6 million dead every hour**

100,000 die in a minute

## **27 billion slaughtered each year**

Just in our Land of the Free - Home of the Brave As we go about the important business of the day

Why should we bother?

Animals are animals you might say They eat each other every day

No Way!. . . .wait!

The animals who we eat, the cows, goats, and sheep, Are vegetarians who do not eat meat Unless it is forced down their throats Which is quite an easy feat

These creatures are docile by nature But we human beings

Trying our best to make a buck We don't even give a flying \_\_\_\_\_

After all it is only some poor slob Chained in a stall who cannot speak after all

Besides isn't that what God put them here for?

If we want to reduce the fear in our own lives In our country, city, town, neighborhood, home In our nervous systems, then why not start with something Near by, close to home

Most of us interact with animals three times a day When we sit down to eat them Instead of exploiting all the mothers Couldn't we try to improve this relationship?

Who give milk, eggs and birth to babies Only to live lives of mourning.

Babies taken from their mothers Mother dripping tears and milk While  
we capitalize on their loss And harvest the white liquid from the nipple  
As we dribble and talk “conversation”  
Meeting in restaurants and cafes When are we going to be kind How  
many rhymes will it take To cause us to pause before we order that  
Burger and Shake?

Speak out.

What better way?

If you won't speak,

What are you busy saying?

Whatever else you had to say, It's not worth that much today.

Rocky Delaplaine

Beyond the Pentagon: Dreaming of Allen Ginsberg, 1970

O Ganga-mouthed Ginsberg, you lit Varanasi incense.

We sat on Whitman's leaves.

The sun revealed the seven gates of green.

Doves flapped  
inside your heart, flew out of your Om, soared on the current of your  
gold-threaded breath.

A poem filled the sky, our eyes collided.  
We prayed to the fallen not for grace,  
but for now.



A tiger crouched  
then roared.

The earth opened  
like your woman hole and took us wholly home.

Rocky Delaplaine

## Surya Namaskar

Biking to work this late—May morning

I feel the drizzle through my jean jacket  
and sweatshirt. Not a drenching but a mist

on the skin, long and slow, just what the lawn needs for the new grass I  
planted. Today I teach

Surya Namaskar hoping to bribe the hiding sun with attention. So much  
rain. I have a student who is dying. She joins us if she can after chemo or  
radiation. Today, as she lay down, she cried.

She doesn't know if she has a week, three months  
or years. One by one, her windows are closing.

One eye no longer focuses. She's nauseous  
from the Tamoxifen. While the rest of us stand, she sits in a chair and  
moves her arms. Inhale, I instruct, let your arms stretch outward

from your heart. Exhale, palms together, gather the universe back within.

Inhale, arms reach for the sun. Exhale, bend down and touch the earth.

“While I'm in class doing yoga,” she says,

“I know that everything is right with the world.”

Rocky Delaplaine

The Shape My Bones Are In

My kneecaps would make

great earmuffs for the  
hear-no-evil monkey.

Squirrels want to curl  
in my soft-sculpture hip sockets and hibernate till spring.

Is it my sacrum or a flounder, seduced by the worm on my tailbone?  
Don't get hooked, I warn, unheeded.

The heart and lungs dangle like fruit bat trapeze artists in the net of my  
rib cage.

Only a hole in the center of my skull, my rhinoceros nose knows physics  
and won't apologize.

When I die, don't cremate me, please.  
Let the snake hoist me up by my stirrup sitting bones

so I can fold flat



like an ironing board  
and slack-clack-rattle in the breeze.

Jessica Durivage

## Oh, Pilgrim Heart

You travel to and from source bringing with you from the womb  
treasures and secrets that are only received in whispers from the Divine.

The journey in is paved with those familiar landmarks; Patterns and  
habits  
dot the deserted landscape like mirages in the distance. . .  
beckoning.

Moments feel suffocating.

. . .This too shall pass. . .

Lying at the feet of the Mother worn and weary from the relentless  
journey in and up.

Rest here, for a while my beloved.

In Her bosom of Infinite Peace and Love.

Bask in the warm glow, steady gaze  
of the Divine.

Gathering up every speck of wisdom and light you can hold, a balancing  
8 limbed act, you hold fast to the fullness.

Trusting the strength of the cord umbilical to life that binds you to the  
Self.

Like an experienced mountaineer, carrying with you Supreme Love and  
Infinite Wisdom; you leave the cave of the heart to root your being back

into the world.

You seek out suffering and pain and selflessly bestow the gifts of unconditional love and light you so carefully hold at the core of your being.

Oh Pilgrim Heart!

May your countless journeys on this river of light bless you with grace and discernment to see the Supreme Self in every wanderer you meet.

Hold most tight—  
the cord that binds you to your own light, and remember this is the most noble journey you shall ever take.

Rose Haft

Wake Up, Wake Up

Days begin and end  
arising intention, saluting the sun, only an hour to get done.

Reverence to cycle:  
Heartbeats to become, come to be, hearts beat as one.

Yielding, folding into:  
Separation from dissensions, tensions to be loved.

Unfolding into the behind us, engaged, it can be done.  
Breath, attention, flooding into life, Letting go, distensions, letting go to  
write. . .

Inhale, prana to wake the might mind gone plank, chatter rung, exhaling,  
to a quieted height.

“Down dog!”

Heels, relaxing down,

to the earth,

mind-full pleas

wander less to adventure, pleased minds filled with wonder, of breath, of  
beauty, of light.

Building heat, fire, opening: A sauna in each body, teacher’s delight.

Tried, untired, true, we trust, aligning right. . .

Warmth filled, radiating bodily lights a class, together of believers, in  
sync, flexible, balanced in sight.

The “I can” becomes the “I did,” to the perpetuating “I am,”  
harmonize with the feat of receivers of those who understand.

One body, one light, one life to be within each moment, choosing our  
mats, letting our daze go, gaze within.

Finding inner truth, a side, no separation in this vessel.

Water filled, clean, flowing, the benefit to nourish, to care, to be: The  
love of today from within the love of the infinite one, The love in we.

Richard Miller

We Are Fish

We are fish swimming  
in a sea of majesty,  
asking everyone we meet for a drink that will quench our fierce fire of  
longing.

Perhaps it is this that enables us to grow wings, so that we may leave the  
ocean, however briefly, and obtain a glimpse of the somewhere else we  
long to be.

We fall back, only to rise again, over and over  
convinced that our flight is liberating us  
from our longing.

What trickery.



The ecstatic state  
of seeing the great expanse of sky leaves us gasping for the water we  
have just left.  
We must leave water for air to realize that all along we were swimming  
in the majesty of our longing.

The trickery goes farther, for in the end we realize that all along we have  
been our majesty swimming in Itself.

# Transformation

There is nothing more I want  
Than to join you in the cocoon

To know the dreams  
That grow wings

Butterfly,  
What is your  
Dream?

HawaH

Aadil Palkhivala

## The Practice

A moment in God's wilderness  
Confirmed what eagles knew,  
That we, like ants to minds of boys, Are granted purpose in the ploys,  
Yet filled with lust for transient toys, Have long forgotten why we do.

An hour upon God's ocean sand Sets slow the orb of gold.  
Wondrous, yet my mortal mind  
Gropes within to reason find— My impermanence to Nature bind—  
Remake my crumbling ego bold.

But wakeful, watchful tender Spirit Smiling shuns the moment's tread.  
The breath of 50 years sighs, Softly, soon my heart replies, Weaving  
threads of life it cries, "Be wakeful soon for you'll be dead."

The urgent plea from deep within Makes me wonder where I've been.  
Must coming years repeat the sin, The great illusion that I win.

I bow down low, take off my hat, Step humbly on my yoga mat.

Karl Saliter

Gift

## **35 ridiculously capable carpenters**

a foreman who was mercifully absent (doubtless chasing skirts in town)

two top-notch operations consultants a mergers and acquisitions team

from the city of Brotherly Love and 13 black sea turtles

(who are not by the way black)

were assembled recently in my head.

They worked without fail for One hundred and eight nights.

They built a platform there Of the finest love titanium It is perfectly  
balanced

leveled with a brand new compassion gauge Cabled with humility steel

It is a safe place from which You can teach me.

There is nothing in this world you can do wrong As my beloved teacher.

This platform surrounds you With reverence, respect, and appreciation.

Teach me.

Karl Saliter

Hamstrung

Practicing forever.

Trying harder than

an ant



moving a fallen tree  
alone, on his back  
without straps.

My crazy head is still

Thirty feet away  
from my laughing feet.

Outside the studio

A gibbous moon rises

Fat in the sky  
Soon, like me, to die

There is no choice but to let go  
no choice, but let go  
Let choice go.

Karl Saliter

## Wheel of Learning

Can I tell you “bow your head”

failing to bow silently, alone on my mat?

I dig, I listen, I mine.

Not to be great as a teacher.

I dig to save myself  
from the enormous sadness of faking it.  
Because Yoga is a “lifestyle choice”  
like the Dalai Lama is a monk.



Svadyaya is optional

like holding your breath underwater.

The teaching is as deep as the teacher.

so pray that your limbs remain attached: pray until your arms fall off.

Karl Saliter

Hey Divine Force!

I want to fall

Deeply enough

in love with

you in me

That I see you

wrapped in others



and love them

such that

molecules and atoms

In their hearts

Spontaneously

Regenerate

Love.

I have no idea how to

Pull this one off.

Could you hook me up with that?

Zaccai Free

## All Connected

This bone-joint-ligament-muscle-fatty-liquid frame sack of shit and piss

All of this soon ends in stink and dust what's the value of greed and lust?

A wood house in the wind twigs, branches, boards and splinters water  
washing through the city it's heart pulsing the blood of the people

Movement as natural as



sushumna rising

magnetized

solar and lunar poles

spine supple strong steady

A channel aligned

out from the body

rests the power of the mind awaiting commands

translating vibrations into thought seeking it's solace/center

Source

the quietude of the soul somewhere between nothing and everything a  
momentary pause  
in the spinning of the wheel

Zaccai Free

## Metaphysical Property

Location, location, location

Real estate—boom!

There's almost not enough room for me to see the sky  
so I salute to the sun inside

Reaching up and back bending low lunging pyramiding

Myself strong  
foundation feet planted  
I shall not be moved.

Shel Spangle



Pariivrtta

As the nights grow cold

I fold inward

Examine

Where are the brittle places

That can wither  
And fall away like leaves?  
A poem or a prayer,  
The turning of the heart.

Let me find

The darkneses and angers



I no longer need

Kiss them

like old friends

And send them away into morning,

Watch them  
As they twist to the light  
Like sunflowers.

Matthew McConnell

## A Wish

to be vibrant, to be healthy. to speak when the moment strikes. to look forward. to not pause or hesitate or be lost in translation or forgotten in a stale cloud of mediocrity. to accept without resignation. to move beyond the anxiety of doubt or disbelief or lack of faith. to get good sleep. to stretch and breathe. . .inhale. . .exhale. . .giving thanks for this moment and these bodies.

to start this day with loving grace, bless us all and kiss your face. to dance naked in the firelight with a full moon high in the sky shining bright. to love with all that i have, and when it's difficult and needed, more. to lie next to you, beside you, inside of you.

to play. to spin lights and sticks and dance and do simple yet beautiful tricks. to perform, for me and you. . . .i might even show up wearing neon colored clown shoes. to hear the music, even when it stops. to feel the rush of waves. to actively create the connections and ways that will sustain us as we experience darker days,—so roll with it.

to be vibrant, healthy. to put one sure foot in front of the other, taking me to where i'm going and arriving with each step.

to dream wide awake, imagining the possibilities while planting flowers in the desert.

to ask. to remember. forget. hold on and let go. to circle the ancient tower and shapeshift.

if i had just one, that'd be my wish.

Pilar ( Jai Satya Kaur) Kimbrell

## Hatha

At dawn the sun sits on the horizon  
emerging from the Gulf  
solid and brazen  
fire drenched red,  
while the moon slumbers  
full and pale in the morning sky.  
I stand on the beach  
warm from the bed  
strung between the vision of two forces:  
pulled by the coolness of the moon,  
intrigued by the flames of the sun:  
like a pendulum  
delicately balanced in the hazy light.  
My eyes drawn,  
my mind,  
dazed  
needing the moon's cool clarity.

## **HA - THA -**

sun moon,  
light dark,  
life death  
ultimate perfect union,  
dancing in the earth's vibration.  
Orbiting around our planet  
constant and firm

constant and firm,  
pre-historic  
witnesses  
as we clamor  
for more and more  
now, today,  
as we daily plunge,  
with consistent abandon,  
into ultimate destruction.

## **HA THA**

sun moon  
rising setting  
eclipsing  
melding one into the other  
perfect union.

I stand between the two  
and try to feel  
the essence  
of perfect symmetry  
right between the eyes:  
heart of fire  
quiet mind  
one body  
one soul  
setting  
rising  
now  
and  
only



now.

Ekabhumi Charles Ellik

If Enlightenment Is. . .

If enlightenment is a destination, then I don't want to go there.

If life is suffering and nothing else,  
then the Buddha can keep it.

If Heaven is a fluffy vacation, then cancel my ticket.

If sainthood is obedience and nothing else,  
then no halo will ever fit me.

If Jesus never laughed, then he is not my savior.

If goddessence is male and nothing else,  
then call me a disbeliever.

But if She swings, and has a sense of humor, if her prophets  
brew a bit of mischief on the rough side of town, if life is a mystery and  
enlightenment  
can be found and lost any where?

Then let's play this game!

Let's jump that train!

Let's cry and laugh, suffer and indulge, fall and bounce,  
dance in the cremation ground.

Let's play a drinking game called duality  
and fight sometimes, often, just  
for the Hell of it.

If Heaven is not a place then you will find me there lost in the throes of  
desire and fulfillment

strutting and fretting my hour upon the stage acting out a tale  
full of silence and bliss signifying everything.

Ekabhumi Charles Ellik

Pain Suite

Pain is a flower  
most folks pull from their garden thinking it common.

How precious and rare to be born in a human body even angels lust.

Some say that Yoga is soft. Easy. For wimps. Yes.

No. It is a mirror.

Miracles do not blossom In the intense heat Of skepticism.

Some pain is torture.

Some, pleasure. The difference?

How I ask for it.

A rose with no thorns Is a teacher with no truth A bowl with no food.

Inside every rock

A silent Buddha waiting For the stone carver.

Ekabhumi Charles Ellik

## Grandma's Ghost

Grandma's ghost spoke through the lips of a shaman: "I never wished this life for you!"

Grandma was a superstitious woman who communed with spirits and studied Egyptian mysticism.

She was as careful

to keep us kids away  
from her astrology books as the bottle of whiskey she kept in her sock  
drawer.

“This Life” of interaction with the unseen and drunken one foot in both  
worlds and now her also



using the medium

she asked me to avoid.

What am I up to,

that she would return sixteen years later

with a warning?

I teach Yoga to seven-year-olds and stressed-out CEO's.

How many evil spirits am I likely to encounter in a million-dollar fitness center?

Legions, it turns out.

We all walk with an invisible posse Of ancestors, angels and demons,  
legacy of an American lifestyle fueled by petroleum imperialism.

Even homeless bums  
sleep on illegal concrete.

San Francisco was stolen from the Mexicans, who stole it from the  
Ohlone Indians, who stole it from the pelicans.

At least the natives prayed to the animals they ate.

When I read a statistic that less than one percent of the world is wealthy  
enough to keep loose change by the bed, it put into perspective the  
privilege of teaching kids yoga at ten dollars a head.

This is no sermon on morality or righteousness, this is a meditation on  
what IS.

Good and Evil

are everyone's neighbors.

The path to enlightenment meanders from rose garden to the rough side of reality disturbingly often.

"This life" means a lot of grave digging. . .

my own.

"Self-Discovery" includes the buried bones of past karmas, the inherited debt of one's ancestors: White Privilege, Alcoholism, Incest.

It is difficult to find an empty plot in this cemetery, earth soaked in blood, hip deep in mud, my shovel striking hard truths and strangely shaped memories.

To most folks, Ego death looks a lot like regular death.

In India, they say

an American birth

is an opportunity

to cash in on good karma and enjoy an easy life on Earth.

Here I am, spending my vacation as an amateur archeologist, sorting gold teeth and wedding rings.

Identifying every body as another aspect of Self: Blissfully Ignorant

Imperialist Me again.

## Racist In Recovery

Me again

Whiteboy mystic.

Me again.

A cosmos unfolding

Me again.

Grandma, thanks for your warning but don't bother mourning, Charles is already dead.

Ekabhumi cleaning up his mess.

Heaping mantras on the heart's fire like logs on Chuck's funeral pyre.

Planting flowers in the family plot.

He left behind no ghost Only flames like petals Of the reddest rose.



Bruce Cowan

## Attention

How many cups of tea  
Have I wasted and let grown cold.

How many breaths  
Have passed unwatched.

Lasara Firefox Allen

## Spaces Between Words

the curse of friendliness

i can't find a spot

to stand in silence

hallas! enough!

i need to find

the spaces between the words

the words between the sentences



the sentences between the paragraphs  
the paragraphs that build the chapters

of this new story

being born in my blood

there is a fire inside

burning through

at the fingertips

waiting to be painted

with words streaked red



like an angry sunset

spreading across  
a pearl-grey sky

i like it better  
when the wind whispers love songs  
tickling my waiting, willing ear

the mountain offers up

ancient scents

and mysteries

histories

unwritten



unspoken

unknown

echoed within

blood and bone

all falls short

so I surrender to this madness

and

dance for Krishna with Mirabai

cry for Shamz with Rumi

seek the Bridegroom with St. John of the Cross

succumb to the agony of love with Beloved Teresa



I look

behind your face

falling into

the light  
that shines through everything.

Lasara Firefox Allen

In the Unknown

This is an adventure

and there are always risks



no one is unchanged

by love

just as

no one is unchanged

by war

birth

death

creation and destruction



walk hand in hand

faith

and doubt

are the same breath

the seed

does not become the tree

without first breaking the shell

that contains the seed



the new sprout

tender and white

not even green yet

no sun to strengthen its fight for growth

yet it reaches

trusting in the light

as yet unknown  
that dwells beyond the dark of the womb

and so we quest

reaching beyond the edges



breaking through the hard shell  
a chick breaking through her egg

birth

is never an easy transition

not for mother

nor child

yet

the time comes  
and there is no way to hold back

we



break through the gate

water flooding

the edges

erasing the ages

wearing slowly

upon the rock

trace the threads of time;

every canyon

was once a plane



then a stream

then a river

than a gorge

than a chasm

water

and wind

wearing even stone

to sand



who are we

to think

we can withstand?

So i reach

for some

as yet unknown

light

spread my wings

prepare for flight



cell by cell

i shed my skin

in this revelation

new life begins

a kid in milk

a tree at seedling

i reach for the light

## Love in the Ocean

I made love to the ocean today. . .

Wrapped my legs around her waves Dug my fingers into her sandy back

I made love to the ocean. . .

Dove head first into bubbles foaming at her mouth My hair was pulled  
out of its braids By her salty determined waters

Actually, I might be mistaken Maybe it was the ocean that made love to  
me?

She wrapped her kelp around my wrists Squeezed me into one of her  
shells

I think I made the hermit crabs jealous. . .

and the dogs bark at her

For a minute I wondered what would happen If we married and had  
children?

Would the dolphins finally move out of the house. . .  
and the jellyfish grow brains?

I made love today,

but it's probably nothing like those with them dirty minds think

You see, I didn't use any protection stripped down naked  
and dove right in.



HawaH

Offering

I had no incense to offer you. . .

My hands were empty

I had no tidings

My shoes were worn and muddy I knew not what you would expect of me I made some wrong decisions.

I came and walked around your temple Doing rounds of 108

I lost count halfway in between I knew not if I should return to the beginning and count again I knew not what I should say when I was before you The rain had me damp

From the burden of a tumultuous journey.

Searching

Always seemingly searching  
For what I could possibly offer. . .

Religion was obscure

But, not wanting to miss any opportunity to know you I surrendered to every holy place and faith I came across.

I came seeking direction

Walked circles around your statues I knew not what to offer

My hands were empty

The fruit I had not purchased From the woman selling alms outside your  
gate.

I entered nonetheless Hungry and thwarted by a self-imposed loneliness

And, I was unsure if I was to feed you. . .

Or, you were to feed me?

At times, I even felt unsure of how to pray.



I came as a wanderer

Wanting to offer something

Yet not knowing what  
Finally, I decided  
I would offer myself.

Savasana

Michelle Lipper

Sweetheart

She whispered softly in my ear.

Wake up.

I brush away the words, willing them to be carried past me on a breeze.

It is time

Again the whisper I try to ignore.

Surrender

I try to will away the sounds of bustling, shuffling, scattering, awakening  
that surrounds me.

I lay,

In peace,

In one piece,

In the only perfect moment of stillness I own.

And still she whispers Open your eyes.

Go away!

Re-engage.

Please don't make me!

Her voice is my own and draws circles of comfort on my soul like  
caresses Come on love, I am love, you are love, there will be stillness  
again Tomorrow.

Peg Mulqueen

## Why Do You Stand There In All Your Doubt?

why do you stand there in all of your doubt?

don't you know that your whole life has led you to this moment. .

.preparing you?

your feet have grown rooted and firm. . .

the result of all those storms you weathered.

yours are the feet that stand their ground.

your legs are powerful. . .



a strength built from trudging  
through some rough and dangerous terrain.  
yours are the legs that move mountains.

your shoulders are broad. . .  
as they are practiced in carrying not only the load you have been given,  
but often bearing the bundle of another.  
yours are the shoulders that hold others up.

all the tears you shed have cleared your vision. . .  
giving you a greater capacity to see all that is there— and who are there  
before you.

yours are the eyes that not only look into the eyes of another but the heart  
of another as well.

and your heart, my friend, has only grown bigger. . .  
each time it was broken and patched back together.  
yours is the heart that no longer knows limits in its capacity to love.

even your hands are not the hands you began with. . .  
for now their grasp is tighter and their grip is stronger.  
yours are the hands of understanding.

i know you are shaking.  
its true—the challenge that lies before you is like none you've faced  
before.

i know you are tired.  
and you should be.  
you've struggled long and hard to get where you stand now.

but i promise you, all that you've ever endured or enjoyed, relished in or suffered with, each time you won— but even more the times you didn't. .

.

have all played their part in escorting you to this place.

your edge.

and it's not the place you stop.

oh no.

it's the place from which you'll begin.

Rachel Barclay

## Transformations

The green transfusion of Light growing out of your iris Is a vine of  
diplomacy Curving up towards me down District solstice beats Caked in  
trees and dirt bare On my feet

Your hands fluctuate under laughter Spirit calls and djembe beats My  
ribcage to a moonbeam breathless We look through willow walls and  
damp heat Vine wrapped in vine Light transfusions meet

And it's the first for me To grow into the arms of this willow tree Atop  
the stillness Behind frozen sound Waving over

You are

Chrysanthemum and honeydew  
Wrapped in smiles Of this fractal  
moment Where we see

We are nothing more Than green dust transfusions Light

And sun beats

Suzanne Davis

## Savvy and Soulful

I drink mochas and I meditate I wear Nikes but never eat meat I do yoga,  
tai chi and I visualize I facebook, I blog and I tweet

Occasionally I pour a martini Daily I sip on green tea

I reflect in contemplation on how I came to be

My laptop, ipod and cell phone suit my savvy inclinations my chakras  
align to enjoy the kindest of soulful sensations

Alexandra Moga

## “You” Inspire God

If the hands of a clock  
The shifting of digital dots  
Would pull us all together  
The world would be  
One giant  
Thundering heart  
In the purest mind  
Seeing with the clarity of  
Timelessness

J. Sarah Chamberlin

## What Dedication Did I Make Again?

Thoughts have slipped through me through cracks in the floor, through  
vertebrae tingling joints loose, hips liberated

I lay under cover, sand bag grounding me lavender floating in the air  
makes its way through my nostrils ujjayi ceased, shallow breathing

I am thinking about my errands for the week I am worrying about how to  
resolve a problem when I get home

I am calculating bills I am aware of a car sloshing through the puddles  
outside

I am interrupted by a person's untimely cough I am pondering my regrets

I am melancholy remembering my departed friend I am planning which  
tea to drink after my practice



Still I lay still

I am perfectly warm and cool Equilibrium

“Find your drishti”

I lay feeling my lower back and measure it's ache and release my pelvis  
is grateful for the attention “Moola bandha, baby!”

My feet are relieved to be done with their job of holding me up  
in veera and warrior poses

Shoulders and neck aching from the dogs carried up and down mountains  
erected,

trees stretched towards the sky Greetings to the sun

legs proving their magic by holding me up to stand with eagles then to sit  
with pigeons Breathe and melt through it

Next time I will open into wheel just

a little

longer

What was my dedication again?

And just as I am letting my thoughts flow through the creases of my mind Acharya rings a gentle bell three times it resonates louder

It tugs me into reality I stretch, reach and roll over letting all that concerns me fall to the side Ananda

My body levitates upwards, crown high like me  
and OM seals my prayer “Namaste”

All those things I thought I needed to do worried about, was distracted by  
are left in the cracks of the floor I leave this womb refreshed

The Oak  
Over the bridge,

Meadow Overstreet

Down stillnessway

Spring light slants, shades, Lampfire elongated like sky-drippings A  
treatise on the phenomena of the unleafed forest Shiny-eyed wonder-  
canyons, Exploding ancient gibberish bellowed on bird tongue, Decoding  
winter

Chunks of bark carving crooked silhouettes Under low gold sun Friend  
tree in the slit By the rock-gilled protruding bank The leafing of the trees  
I sit, tucked

Sweat-backed to generous girth, Moss skin and muscular grunt Bank's  
muddy edges, Convulsive eye-battles Between microscopic bazaar  
beneath toes And the frantic leaf-parade unfolding above Possibility  
One oak,

Still gripping winter's wilted leaves December's gloomy garments,  
Convincing smile

Mute, rigid, defiant to spring's resurrection Reminds me of the  
evergreens I am not And rope swings tied to a certain solitude Disguised  
as serenity Green is a smile not tinted sepia Not old Not past tense  
Pale, grainy

Not tattered edge memory Retired love

Green isn't cold, clear-cut, receding Mountain's bones

Misplaced affection Green joins the progress of the seasons Doesn't  
unravel like a fluttering banner Beating the air

Of recollection

Green doesn't know a rough winter Admits spring

Cups her soft-lipped lobes Around even a dim earth Impregnated by  
wind Births spirit seeds Rings my frozen creek edges like a song The oak

Me

Becoming as familiar as our backward bending heart bows  
Hanging onto old robes  
Giving in to this convincing Harvest of gravity  
The oak

Me

Staring in the face Diminishing sunset



Lauren Milano

## City of Seagulls

I long to be as still as the seagulls that congregate along the surf.

Sunbathing and meditating on the subtle breeze  
sifting through their feathers.

Gazing out towards the mass of sand with a high chin and erect chest.  
They just seem so sure of themselves.

And on two toothpick like legs they manage to never waver or wobble  
when the waves crash their way.

Candace Mickens

Hands Held High

Hands held high

Fold and bend

Stretttttch

Curve like a snake

Curl like a Child

REleaaaase

Somewhere between my triangle pose and my downward dog I forgot about work and lost my cares about my family and friends  
Perhaps it was on the bridge that my thoughts disappeared and reappeared with greater clarity and purpose as I stood still as a tree.

Closed eyes dissolved the mask that I wear to keep people and things at a distance so I can pretend to be separate and distinct an inner smile connected my heart beat to the rhythm of the earth and reverberated through each breath

Absent was the audible sound of the OM  
so many erroneously correlate to a new age practice Present was the pulse of oneness and resonance of my heart chakra  
as it opened like a flower and gave fuel to the eternal life force that spanned beyond all of the ages and gave rise to the collective OM



which can be only heard  
if you listen from within.

Chloe Smith

## Circumvent

Think of the winter birds that brave high cold and northern winds, walk  
for miles and miles on end  
with one egg waiting for their icy return.

One chance  
at new life.

Survival.

Think of their black and white love dance  
on times you feel pity for your human experience.

Your broken heart.

Your triumphs and failures that circumvent  
the globe.

Think of the relativity of the words sacrifice.  
harsh.

Turn yourself into an animal and laugh at all this chatter.

## Service

I could die here  
Make my limbs a tree  
Place each thought in a leaf  
Fix my posture,  
So my grandchildren's backs are straight.

HawaH

Rod Stryker

Dharma Pearls

***No More Complications***

If things are complicated,  
be assured that you have become a stranger to your soul.  
Endlessly asking how, when, who. . .  
is turning away from spirit,  
who quietly waits with all the answers and whimsy you need to fully  
shine. Why choose complicated?  
That's one more complication,  
one more turning away from the simple beauty of Being.  
Cast aside the complications and embrace the quiet love that binds you to  
all.

***Joyous***

Searching outside of myself

true satisfaction remains just beyond reach.

Strange.

Returning to a vibrant inner world, immerses me in the beauty  
that I had been searching for all along.

Now that beauty is everywhere,

even in the places where I had previously seen nothing wonderful.

Enriched by the inner light of wisdom all longings are joyously satisfied.

Life is again an infinite celebration.

Thank Goodness.

### ***Unlock Your Locks***

Mind is the key that either locks you in the prison of your own creation  
or frees you to play in Nature's exquisite and boundless landscape.

It is easy not to see that your mind isn't inclined toward peace.

Penetrate beyond its surface however and access the Majestic universe,  
the answers to all questions and a path through any obstacle.

Meditate to train your mind

day after day and awaken  
its spectacular capacities.

### ***Lost Socks***

Stuck is a sign that you've stopped tuning to your endlessly inventive,  
curious, wise and unpredictable soul.

Don't wait to figure out why  
you are not honoring your Self.

Unburden yourself of your laments, all those lost socks you used to love,  
so your life again becomes what it was meant to be: an original, never  
ending song that lifts all beings.

### ***Real Living***

In meditation I tiptoe, some days soar, into the world of the unmanifest.  
Words can never fully portray this landscape of Grace, but I can tell you  
that you could search endlessly in the world of things and not have a clue  
about the power, beauty and brilliance that lies beyond it.

It's hard to imagine living,  
really living, without having tasted heaven.

That is why we stop to sense what everything has come from.

### ***Ceaseless Kisses***

In life's sea of hassles and troubles we search for Grace.

Most look where they can find it: pleasure, even if it's the kind that has  
no staying power.

Seekers comb for it,



knowing that its rays beam brightly during certain phases of the swinging pendulum of mind.

The sage sees Grace's ceaseless blessing everywhere.

What hardship?

Life's a Divine embrace,

like so many sweet kisses from Eternity that never stop.

### ***Fuel Your Spark***

Things standing in your way?

Take heart.

It's part of being human.

The sages counseled,

no matter the goal—sacred or mundane— power is key to traversing your impediments.

Tantra says lightening is already in your bottle.

Take responsibility for the gift.

The right teacher, practice, and sacrificing your distractions will make you a lightning rod, able to zap what stands in the way of the treasures you seek.

Rebecca Dowd

## Surrender

The tree has no choice but to be tossed by the wind, belted by hail,  
scorched by the sun.

Her roots go so deep that it doesn't matter.

The changing seasons are no burden;

her branches yield and her leaves fall to nourish her another year.

And with each turn of the earth she rises closer to the light of the sun.

And with each turn of the earth her roots go deeper, until at last she falls  
without struggle

back into her Mother's waiting arms.

Karolyn Kinane

## Ordinary Life

My ordinary life will sometimes tell Me that I need to rush through  
dinner, or Fill empty space with words or numb my mind With movies,  
facebook, junkfood, or more wine.

And yet my ordinary life of snow,  
Soup, fire, grass, sun, rabbit, cat, book, and sleep Needs space in which  
to happen and be felt.

In breath, the being and the doing merge.

Like a Japanese tea ceremony,

A preparation and event itself,

All the moment needs is my attention For each gesture to be graceful, to  
brew A tea both delicate and bold, just as Wholesome in the making as  
the taking.

C. Elizabeth Knapp

## Whole

Just as I tell myself I've arrived. . .

As I've breathed with mindful sensitivity into the placement of My feet,  
legs, hips, torso, neck, head, & arms Just as I become my pose, tasting  
perfection. . .

The tiniest, insistent urge to move visits.

Exploring, deeply in the center of continuous breath; Inquiring, I inhale  
& lengthen, exhale & soften.

I spread the toes of one foot farther apart, Plant the heel of the other more  
solidly on the earth.

Rooting through soles of feet,

Radiating from center, I engage & draw focus Discovering one place. .

.one small place Where I can let go—

In that instant an invitation arises, I accept, &

Subtly shifting my hips. . .

I am transformed!

Space, buoyancy, & ease bloom From this cultivated ground.

Eyes closed, air caressing skin, Senses heighten.

Conscious of the Grace that flows Here, in this moment

I am Whole.

Vivekanand Jha

## Transcendental Meditation

Sitting in a corner, cross leg down I celebrate subconscious mind to be  
On the centre of transcendental eye I mutter a holy mantra  
To bring my roaming attention which tries to slip away  
like fish from the grip of hand to reemerge into the pond  
filled and flowing with water of illusion.

I let loose all my limbs  
As if they were not mine

And I contemplate upon  
self composed darkness outside only one dwelling inside to illumine.

Bibhu Padhi

Awakened

Nothing works.



The usual things

that acted so well

on other days

are left alone.

What kind of truth

tries to establish  
itself through you?

The voice of the past  
is heard and responded to.

A voice deep  
in recollections,  
self-deceits. You

never know how



you would act  
tomorrow, now that

the past has

taken hold

of miracles, cryptic  
histories of the self.

Swami Ramananda

Here We Go Again

an investigation took place

on my cushion this morning  
a dozen suspect thoughts in a lineup the witness identified every one  
exposed, they fell silent

though guilty of impersonation

they were harmless and released



then the whole place faded  
as a convincing dream dissolves it disappeared—a curl of smoke in the  
wind and a shimmering sea of pictureless sound

emerged in its place

am i forever bound by these phantoms— shadowy figures whispering  
clever lies from alleyways

let me press my head even closer to the floor take refuge in the secret  
hand

that somehow threads a needle in this darkness  
that creates a path for me

even when i run in the wrong direction

let that boundless heart be my last home

Jeremy Frindel

## God's Waiting Room

There can be no appointment with God  
None that we can arrange  
The best we can do is take shelter  
In His waiting room  
Knowing if we stay long enough  
He's bound to pass through

Jeremy Frindel

You

there is no other

Dylan Barmmer

## Bird

Our wings get broken  
our feathers, mangled and plucked  
but we can still Fly. . .

Judith Hanson Lasater

## Un Poema Por Un Amor Desconocido

La vida es una pesadilla hermosa.

Hay felicidad y tristeza, sonrisas y lagrimas,  
ganancias y perdidas.

Pero cuando tu me tocas, lo olvido todo,  
y el alma respira otra vez.

## A Poem For An Unknown Love

Life is a beautiful nightmare.

There is happiness and sadness, smiles and tears,  
gains and losses.

But when you touch me, I forget it all,  
and my soul breathes  
once again.

Joshua Onysko

## Niralambaya Tejase

Pining for the relative existence a process with no abbreviations. . .

no alterations, leaving me with sleeves short and a split sense of  
misguided adorations. . .

who does assume this form of reality. . .



consciousness and bliss

while the world around us is absent and not at peace. . .

hard to keep my posture from my pose while my understanding is laced  
with omnipresent suffering. . .

seduced by the conceptual practice of healing when we advertise the  
plight of mankind every hour on the hour. . .

intermittent commercials

selling me ease and solutions to problems that have been illuminated  
in vein by the truth at hand. . .

we are where we stand. . .

just as much as where we sit and what we sit with. . .

and the process. . .

the process to a true understanding of freedom that requires no others to  
fall. . .

the cosmic imbalance that teaches us to surrender. . .

in a culture that has taught us that surrendering is a process of  
elimination not a process of salvation. . .

sacrifice and devotion. . .

Susan Littlefield

## Pulling Strings

Love lines falling from the sky  
Pinned to limbs, heart and voice  
direct me please  
so I may speak act and play  
with unfettered compassion and grace.

Cristina Zapata

## Look Inside

If I only look inside, I see nothing If I observe inside, I find the universe  
If I find nothing, I find everything If I don't love anyone, I truly love  
everyone

If I sit and listen in my universe listening I give you my compassion  
Don't ask my advice, I place it in your path, don't ask my judgement I  
only observe

If you find a friend in me

I am on the right path

because I have attracted you

If I love you, but don't need you, be sure my love is sincere

If you love me, but can live without me, I am sure you really love me

Although we are two rivers living separately from one another,

One day we will both end up in the same ocean.

Olga Alvarado

## Into Me

Racing pulse as the sweat drips down My petrified bones unmovable  
Like a sculpture it screams let me go Out of this space I find my eyes  
Open to a black curtain tickling Painfully teasing me are its ties To my  
head that go left to right Touching nothing but feeling everything That is  
there and not there But is here and getting near To take me away forever  
theirs A rock under my hand, smooth The surface is, hurting and  
soothing My fear is reaching its peak Into my heart the drumming  
Sounds deafening, healing, beautiful Lightness lifts me up, loosening The  
stiffness, no more

Lying to myself, it's pointless To resist the beauty of flight At this hour  
soaring high Are the clouds beneath me Is the body and the home  
I thought was mine but I now see Up here and down there  
It's not me because I'm everywhere I see it's me, and it's you too That I  
see when I took the journey Into me, suddenly  
I understood.

Cecilia Leigh

## Bound

We tie ourselves up in thoughts and beliefs So tight that our convictions  
clench down a solid structure of gospel Never to be unwound

Or we might have to question The binder twine that holds us together In  
solid form

So easily cut loose

That if free

Our inner parts would breathe into a wildness so pure it must be god



So we dance

Between bondage and freedom Not certain which one is better

Hoping that each time we unwind It won't be our undoing But an  
opening to something better

Tias Little

## The Simplicity of Breath

It is enough now, the blue blue sea And the whites of her eyes and cloud  
Like sheets of glass on high.

I will take you there, where you have been, And already are, the place  
Not of worship or want, or knowing But the simplicity of breath And  
your light chest heaving Like swells of the sea  
And the taste of spray on your tongue.

Tias Little

## Giant Earplugs

The mountains this morning  
Are giant earplugs  
Deafening all sound  
In the canyon of my mind.  
The sky is thin  
But a sheet of glass  
Reflecting back to me  
The pitter-patter of my thoughts.  
Ozone.

JJ Semple

It

The sort of it is It.

The it of it is It.

The all of it is It.

Thomas McElwain

I'm Lucky

I'm lucky to be of the Iroquois

Who have, they say, twelve souls that they enjoy.

I have a pagan soul that I employ

About the skies adorned with hope I scan.

I have a Christian soul, a Jewish plan, A Muslim soul and one Samaritan.

My Hindu soul clashes not with the Jain, My Buddhist with my Taoist  
soul in vain.

Confucianist is the last soul I name, Besides the Druid that I love to  
claim.

The twelfth soul is the first, a secret song Outside the lays of  
righteousness and wrong Of the great world traditions: it's my soul  
That's hidden in You, my Beloved and goal.

Karen King

## Revelation

It's not about them or us, or even about you;  
it is about me, about  
taking of myself  
setting boundaries  
connecting while remaining independent  
It is about accepting responsibility  
for my own insecurities.

Tazima Davis

## Sadhana Reveals

a curious introduction and a bunch of awkward firsts gave way to a  
shape, a space, a movement, a rhythm re-learning my breath, re-learning  
my body, realizing myself

comfort in this familiar ritual of breath and body this grand ancient mala  
of pearls, worn yet casts light enlivened in the sharing, made new in the  
practice

this journey with a path endlessly inward, constantly deeper beckons  
with fiercely eager

yearning



yet profoundly tranquil calm

rewrites my life, unfolding as moments of sparkling truth

both private and fully revealed in this reunion with my beloved divine i

see my true self within the sacred sound

Beth Farrell

Home

I sit in Lotus

and wonder  
as I did that day dreaming  
in Ojito with a white hawk on shoulder

what home meant

where it was

and I disappeared  
blending into oneness of wind, sage, pine  
sandstone, sun, and ancient sea



home again  
in the heart of this life.

Valarie Carriere

Star. . .

As I swim to the bare unconscious naked and pure  
my five star talisman within I am reaching with my own hand my own  
will  
within reach nearing my fingertips with magnetic tides pulling us  
together with the five directions and the sun's reflections my dreams are  
attainable the unconscious coming to the surface a reflection of the inner  
and outer a masculine and feminine encounter. . .

Krishna Das

## Flying at Night

From up here, I can see clearly.

Faint flickering lights hint at the path of a winding road That stretches  
out across the land.

Dice thrown on the table of the night.

The light of a town glares in the distance, A burning ember held in the  
black palm of the night.

People are drawn to this cold fire to live near others of their kind.

I can see their lives from here.

Another faint spark flickers in the dark distance.

An outpost at the edge of what men know. . .

Let me live there,  
on that edge that swallows men and their electricity.  
Embracing all in silent wonder.

Fearless.

Gigantic.

Invisible.

Shawn Parell

## When They Ask About Your Gods

when they ask you about your gods,

tell them you believe in the white blaze of a star, burst from its bud  
in the clear sky of a frozen night.

tell them about the silent whispers that rise from the deep black waters of  
your soul and flow through any ordinary moment.

and tell them how there are no ordinary moments.

how life in every second is moving wildly over this canvas, across this  
landscape, to an unknown sea.

then tell them about your mother's voice: how it cracked exquisitely that  
time she touched her heart and spoke your name.

how she never taught you to abandon your seeking, but to fall always and  
everywhere  
towards the center of your being.

when they ask you, tell them these things.

tell them how god reaches out for god.

Shawn Parell

Searching

it's easy

to catch me

in the act



of  
searching.

my key

my words  
my soul.

i am a harbinger of

drawers  
left open.

and i wonder at things  
like:

what keeps a bird

up



what keeps a heart

down

why the sea returns to shore

each time  
it is rejected.

at the quiet lift  
of early morning, why,

in the orange light

of rising

i've

been known to forget

the forms



of name and place

as thoughts rise up like springtime mountains—

carry me over treetops

through forests  
and out to the open sea.

only to find the thing  
i've been searching for

has also been searching  
for me.

Erik Calderón

**At Your Service (*Translated from Spanish by Catherine  
Prescott and HawaH*)**

In the name of yesterday, today and tomorrow, I ask my great strength  
awakened, to protect, care, teach, and serve, and from this day forth To  
stand with you in the face of injustice

Warrior ancestor return

How long is the way  
till the hand of courage Knocks on my door  
I need not walk this path alone

When I open

Worlds, lives, years, reincarnations clear our path, dissolve our actions  
to understand life's lessons

Strength, power, fame, fortune and beauty are worldly things longed  
for. . .

When forgetting true happiness and success are beyond the material  
world

Protect, care, teach, and serve, a way of life,  
to share my love and feel one with all my brothers and sisters, until my  
last heartbeat.

Begins again.



Sean Labrador y Manzano

## Calla y Calla

I am a scale by which your body floats lithe and buoyant under the dense canopy of mossy live oak shading the Amphitheater Shouldn't we perform our defiance for onlookers jogging between rest stops fixing our positions into stone?

How remarkable you stretch above me Gravity is a state of mind, beyond thought, anchored in a belief that centers of mass flex then break when stressed beyond vision I have fallen asleep to your voice, but you misread my conduct as dismissive.

Your voice is sanctuary,  
a place I can inhabit,  
a warm shroud.

Now I am about to fall into the emptiness of your possibility, folded into your arms,

bending the air, instructing my body to lift the air with you, like the meniscus, an insoluble needle, retracing the sonograph of our diminished selves,  
a crepuscular horizon, we are transparent

Where else can we meet in winter, and orbit a persuasive constellation, listening to the quietude of its clusters, and maybe ease the ampolleta passing judgment over our time together.

Katrina Harris

Effluence

And she unfolded.

Just like a letter.

Reaching and flipping and turning, until she lay flat on her back.

Chest open.

Palms up.

Her words for the world to see.

Creases and tears across her cheeks.

Scars and smudges across her skin.

Misspelled poetry in private places;

curse words and professions exposed.

Her heart beat open upon her ribcage,

revealing her depth of life in painted colors.

Its value bubbling over in streams of brilliant hues.

Washing away the tepid floor boards that hold her down.

Releasing a resplendent light

of self protection.

So strong and calm,

that her reflection  
matched that of the sunshine that illuminated downwards.

Peggy Dyer

Once Upon a Yoga Mat

Once upon a yoga mat

With myself I simply sat  
I put my ass upon the floor  
I found my breath and connected my core

Inhale



Exhale

Forward bend

Deep inside things start to mend

Finding space between my toes

breathing in through my nose

Stacking my bones

Strong and still

I start to exert free will

A simple choice  
That's mine to make

Simply shine bright



Real not fake

How I am feeling

What I express

Things I uncover

Drenched and a mess

Donna Quesada

## The Ranting and Raving Old Monk

The ranting and raving old beloved monk, covered with flowing  
butterscotch robes—

What if the expanding universe had shrunk, into scientific matters he  
probes—

And the troubles of this world he contemplates, the devastation driven all  
by greed—

No light possible if everyone hates,  
attachment to the self, a bitterweed—

Clearly though, it's always been the same, he says, even the rarest  
sparkling stars—

The Gandhis and Kings couldn't fan the flame, remove the affliction, or  
iron the scars—

Racing in vain to unscramble life's clues, for simply looking inside, most  
refuse.

Liz Belile

## Love Poem for Shakti



the heart is a place

of mystery

green  
and fragrant,

wild with vines  
and tears,

oceans and

starsalan

an empty hallway

of drums

a horizon of sunsets,



swingsets

echoing with

the unstruck sound

the heart

is a chamber

of bells

i open it like a drawer

for you

like a temple door



carved in wood

covered in thumbprints

weighing ten thousand pounds  
yet it grows light as breath

for you

breeze

swings open with a sigh

silent as prayer

and you boldly enter



with your highbeams

and your tigerskin on

a whole marching band

parade with floats

follows you in

it's a full-on celebration here

in the field

of the heart

when you enter



Michelle Fajkus

## Skinned Knee

ask and you shall receive but be careful what you wish for  
i wanted liberation in london they lost my luggage

i found myself alone

surrounded by yankees and brits

i wanted ananda in canada to camp at an ashram

too much chanting  
esoteric philosophies and a mean swami later i was back home in bed,  
depressed  
i wanted californian change found out, yes, there is such a thing as too  
much yoga  
and there are both zen centers and christian radicals in the city by the bay  
i wanted to soak up mexico to eat sandia with frida came home with a  
souvenir en mi corazon  
and one in my intestines  
i wanted india in my skin fell to my knees and scraped the left one the  
dhamma nazis threw saffron-colored powder on my little wound  
it didn't hurt  
but i cried quiet tears that had been waiting years to reach the surface

this moment is perfect every one is  
equanimity tattooed inside my forehead gratitude for spiders and saffron  
and dhamma  
what will you ask for?  
what will you receive?

Marni Sclaroff

## Dark and Light

dark and light are next door neighbors dark is the desert with scrub brush  
and rattlesnakes light is she who wears a satin gown that glows she floats  
on a translucent veil of fluttering doves her feet never leave the ground  
the elements move through her like dancing waves sometimes tidal ones  
and she stays completely still dark is fear

sticky

sweaty

light is beauty

brilliance



love

a warm radiating sunshine it encompasses with nourishment dark

encompasses

with a windowless stuffy arrogance a dim future

short sighted vision

stuffed pockets of stolen dreams both live inside of me they are the fertile  
ground of consciousness each day I go to them and I ask if we can all  
work together can we meet in the middle right in the center  
beyond “my house or yours”

where the door between is wide open and the magical mystery is queen  
she passes through back and forth

with the grace of blue heron eating brunch over there and tea over here  
she becomes an honored guest, no longer in prison she feeds me words  
that tumble out like jewels the most precious kind like ripe pomegranate  
seeds sweet and delicious

leaving little stains of ruby on my shirt

when dark and light get along, I float down the river on a boat fit for a  
queen and I rest in the outrageous delight of the unfolding heart.

Marni Sclaroff

Kali Ma

In the bushes I lay there dead

exploded

like shimmering stardust

melted wax

a sailor's knot

your face right up close



familiar

with eyes wide open

a mouth full of space  
and a garland of letters around your waist  
the bright sun brings it to light

In the center

the midline between

who I was and

will be

I sat there with the seed in my heart

that never changed  
even as my limbs were strewn  
amidst the heap of days gone by  
you sat there right in front



cheering me on

as I crumbled to

pieces of whole

and cried tears

of infinite sadness

infinite joy

and everything else  
in between.

Shiva Rea

Sunset Sandhya

Solstice Canyon is the edge that has dissolved all my practices.

Sitting here at sunset,  
the peak of the day where breath hovers,  
a presence permeates this valley



ancestors

vivid colors,

the scent of wild sage, fennel, rosemary, the brilliant fireball of the Sun

the ocean becoming sky on the horizon a hawk soaring without effort

making One song of this moment.

As the sky melts into orange, purple and blue, my eyes bathe in sublime

beauty my practices wash down my cheeks

no-thing is left

only the breath dancing  
in everything.

## Acknowledgements

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with their friends, and lent their voices to this massive project.

## About the Editor

HawaH has dedicated his life to teaching about solutions to violence and ways to peace, and has traveled to over 35 countries to facilitate interactive workshops, dialogues, perform poetry, teach yoga, and speak with those interested in creating a caring, sustainable, and equitable world. He has worked as an Americorps big brother in one of Washington, D.C.'s most under-resourced neighborhoods, and also as an R.F.K. Memorial Foundation fellow as a special representative to the United Nations and the World Conference Against Racism.

HawaH is co-founder and executive director of One Common Unity, a non-profit organization that inspires non-violent culture through education, music and media. For 3 years he directed the Peaceable Schools Program in D.C.'s largest public high school— specifically developing leadership skills of youth and assisting them in dealing with trauma through Alternatives to Violence, Deep Breathing & Yoga classes.

Over the years, HawaH has trained thousands of teachers in the principles of social-emotional learning and has regularly featured as a speaker, performer and workshop presenter for People to People International, the Congressional Youth Leadership Council and the Children's Defense Fund's Freedom Schools. A spoken word poet known as *Everlutionary* and an artist of a diverse collection of paintings and photographs, he has authored four books, produced three

documentary films, and released two musical CD's.

## Other works by HawaH

### **Books**

Trails: Trust Before Suspicion (non-fiction travel novel) — 2001

Escape Extinction (essays and poetry) — 2003

zerONEss (poetry and prose) — 2005

### **Documentary Films**

A Weigh With Words — 2007

The MLK Streets Project — 2011

Fly By Light — 2015

### **CDs:**

Survival for All Of Us — 2008

CALL — 2010

### **Online**

[www.EVERLUTIONARY.net](http://www.EVERLUTIONARY.net) — 2000





One Common Unity is a grassroots 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

Since the year 2000, they have been supporting and inspiring a movement for peace education and the building of a nonviolent culture through music, media and art.

For more information about their pioneering initiatives please visit

[www.OneCommonUnity.org](http://www.OneCommonUnity.org)

50% of proceeds from this book are donated to their work.

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