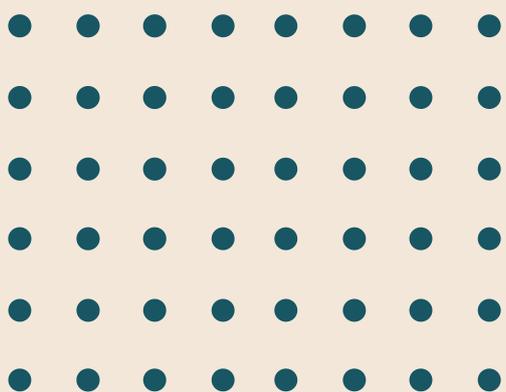


MELBOURNE CULTURE CORNER

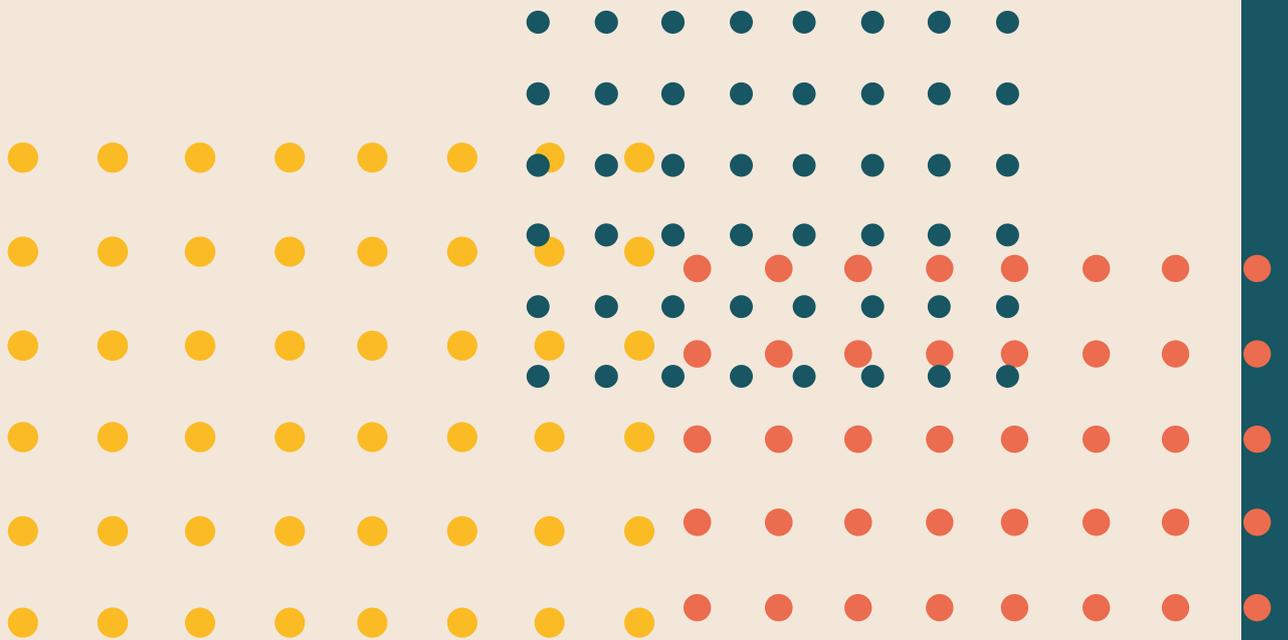
MCC IX

PRESENTS ISSUE NINE



CONTENTS

OLIVIA ALLAN2
MIMI BORDEAUX..... 3
ROSE KNAPP..... 4
SHIKSHA DHEDA..... 5-6
YUU IKEDA 7
KEYA CHAKRABORTY..... 8
ROHIT CHATRATH..... 9
ACHINGLIU KAMEI 10
EDWARD LEE 11-12
KIT TERRELL..... 13



Olivia Allan

Tenderness

Love
holds the words
that come from my mouth,
properly,
and that's why you drop them
every
single
time.

dropped lower than you can look

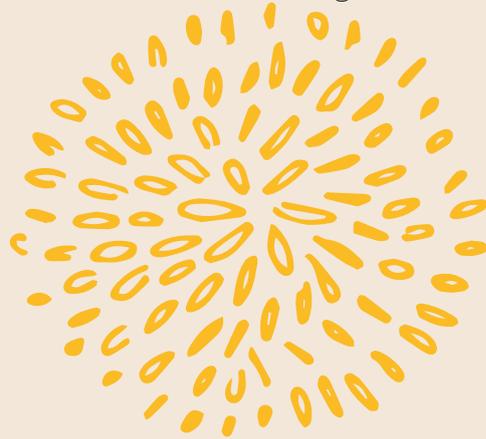
you'd rather not take them at all.

but please
try take my words
for more than they are.
they mean more than any
dictionary says
hear the sounds
hear my body
and let my language in
the way i send it.

Revel

the spaces between us are
like changing gardens,
landscapes of
beauty and challenge
some even
like countries

where we stay and revel
hanging on the edge of
a smile
stretching the
horizons of the earth
and sea
outwards
with each kindness and
moment of
understanding



Olivia Allan is a writer from Melbourne Australia. She is currently undergoing a degree in psychology in the heart of the city and loves riding the train everywhere.

When she isn't studying she writes on her beloved typewriter and struggles in pilates classes. Her Twitter handle is @livppoetry.

Mimi Bordeaux

TWITCH

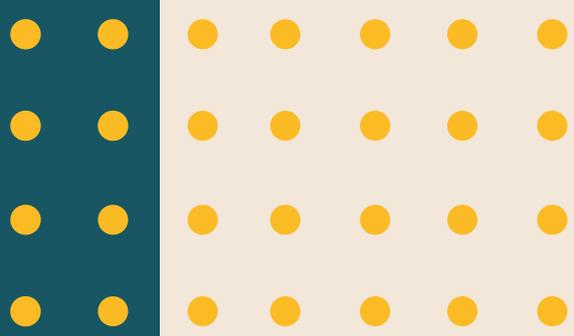
One two to five six done twelve dexies by midnight
I am flying like a vulture combing land over Atlantic seas
I see your great head stuck in the pillow face covered by feathers
how

I love your hair sticking out dreadies no comb put through it in
months put pen to paper let the good times roll now

I am really vibing got the dexies working 'til after twelve midday
yeah awake wide eyed child of your friend's house we're covered
til winter summer close by we will go swimming in LA sands
beachfront bulk great hilltop.

It's time to drive to New Orleans tonight let's get pilled and hit the
booze joints with some cool jazz playing I'm a coming!





Rose Knapp

Cloudburst

Formless, essence-less, clusters of wind
Vaporous apparitions of mist wisp wisterias
Into whirlwinds of glittering gigantomachias



Afterlives

Rushing urgently and suspensefully
Through infinities of belief systems

Some leading to paradise or being reborn
Some to purgatorio, some to other worlds



Rose Knapp (she/they) is a poet and electronic producer. She has publications in Lotus-Eater, Bombay Gin, BlazeVOX, Hotel Amerika, Fence Books, Obsidian, Gargoyle, and others. She has poetry collections published with Hesterglock Press and Dostoyevsky Wannabe. She lives in Minneapolis. Find her at roseknapp.net and on Twitter @Rose_Siyaniye

Shiksha Dheda



Ode to persistent potplants

Rooted are you to
my suburban window-sill.

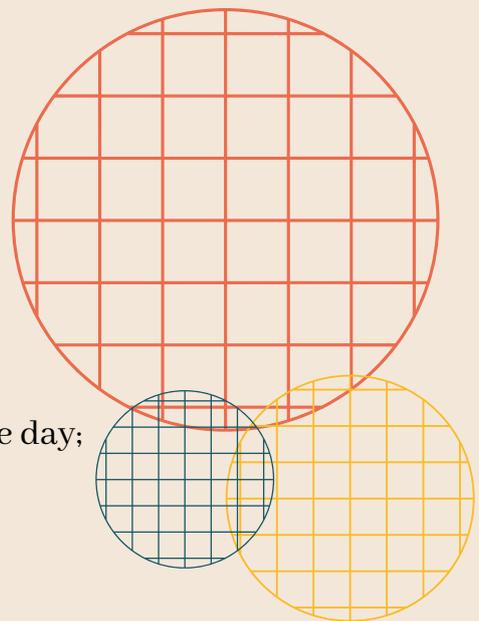
A heated lava lamp and
a 75 watt bulb of flame
-your rays of sunlight.

Your sky- the canvas
of my movie posters;
your thirst quenched by
the dribble from
my water bottle.

The sole carbon dioxide
that I exhale
-your air.

Growing
- higher –
your
bark getting thicker by the day;

symbolic that battles,
-no matter how minute-
-unnoticed-
are won every
day.



The Pact

Burdening me with expectations;
your forsaken ambitions, your incomplete dreams.

Retaliating with the rebellion of
self-introspection and soul-searching.

Weighing me down, forcing me
to bend- to slouch instead of stand tall.

Throwing muck in your eyes, making you
bite dust-lowering your heads in shame.

Making me your scapegoat, your consequence,
your support, the object of your action.

You become my resultant; my substance,
my punishment, the object of my reaction.

Forgiving me for my youth,
suffering for my actions.

Forgiving you for your circumstance,
suffering for your decisions.

Shiksha Dheda is a South African of Indian descent. She uses poetry(mostly) to express her OCD and depression roller-coaster ventures. Sometimes, she dabbles in photography, painting, and baking lopsided layered cakes.

Her work has been featured (on/forthcoming) in Off Menu Press, The Daily Drunk, The Kalahari Review, Brave Voices, Anti-heroin Chic, Versification, and elsewhere. Twitter: @ShikshaWrites

Yuu Ikeda

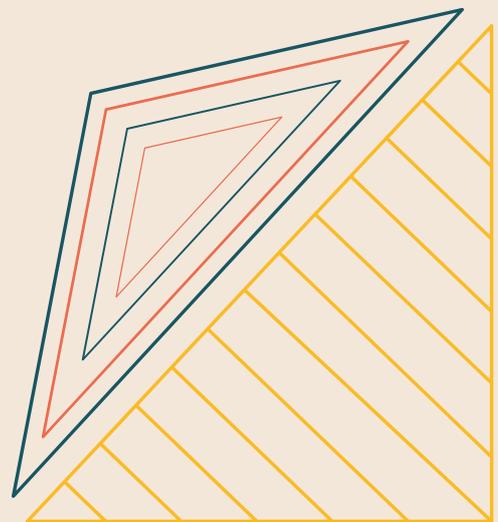
“Love is...”

Love is the morning glow
floating on ugly horizon

Even if
lack of hope
covers this world,
the morning glow
surely emits
its scent of the oath to light

Love is the morning glow
wandering on poisonous horizon

Even if
despairing silence
resounds in this world,
the morning glow
surely grows
its bud of the oath to the sun



Yuu Ikeda is a Japan based poet.
She loves writing, reading mystery novels,
and drinking sugary coffee.
She writes poetry on her website.
<https://poetryandcoffeedays.wordpress.com/>
Her published poems are “On the Bed” in Nymphs,
“Love? or Death?” in Sad Girl Review,
“Poetry Drops Like Raindrops Do” in JMWW,
and more.

Keya Chakraborty

Fragmentation

Seconds chased me
Minutes bowed me
Hours chained me
Days! Illuminated me
Nights terrified me.
What remains is -

Ah! That pallid but vaunted look ahead.

Vision gleaned, rephrased, sharpened-
Memories revisioned, cherished, forgotten
Kinship! Loosening, withdrawing, some retreating

What matters is -

Ah! That pallid but vaunted look ahead.

We stand, stay, stumble and resume/retreat

Happen to meet these fragments

Look weary, bowed and overridden

And then what is evoked –

An irreparable feeling.....

Behold! Life goes on!

Keya Chakraborty is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English at the University of Asia Pacific (UAP) in Dhaka, Bangladesh. She did her B. A (Honours) and M. A. in English Literature from the Department of English, University of Dhaka. She has an extensive interest in feminism studies, post-colonial studies, the issues of diversity, both national and international, within a social studies education context. Before joining at UAP, she had taught mostly literature courses at two other private universities, Sylhet International University, Sylhet and Millennium University, Dhaka for almost two years. She has published a number of scholarly articles.

Rohit Chatrath

The Impish Art of Speaking ill

The impish art of speaking unthinkably ill
Gives a mysteriously sadistic chill
To the backbiter who spares none but goes for the kill.
Always at the expense of character of others
Predator's unbridled tongue never shudders
Unchecked, uncurbed habit like this follows no -ism
Yes, they would call it the uncanny knack of criticism.
Even scruples can't give them a qualm or prick
Scandalizing anyone with a casual flick
Defamation is their most favorite trick
Which they keep handy and wield with a click.
Oh! What a strong and indomitable will
Is required to master the impish art of speaking ill.

Azure Sky on a Fine Morning

Azure sky on a semi-silver platter
Evokes in me a queer pining
I see in it a dimly-discovered silver lining
I witnessed the Sun's latent rays silently shining
Which asked me to stay calm and let positivity patter
And promised me of a morrow certainly better.
Azure sky dawning an early morning cloudy mantle
Gives to the free birds lilting delights
Who hinge on their dreams with their soaring flights.
The hiding Sun too might be dispensing his rays
Lending warmth of love to those in sentimental haze
Twinkling stars might have left many in a dreamy state
Where exuberant hopes will be fanning the dwindling grate.
This beautiful day, though, will give way to the darkness
But Azure sky on a fine morning will kiss and bless
Will surely spread humanity, compassion and kindness.

Rohit Chatrath, 37, hails from Jalandhar City of Punjab State in Republic of India and has been working as Assistant Professor in English with a College. A Postgraduate in English Literature, he has 3 Research papers to his credit. Apart from teaching, he loves critiquing literary works of post-colonial/ post-modern frame with a special focus on the marginalized. In addition to being a published Poet, he is a TEFL (Teaching English as Foreign Language) ESL/EFL Teacher. He has also authored other thought-provoking poetic-pieces like, "A Power Caricature" and "When Things Don't Go My Way" etc.

Achingliu Kamei

WALK AWAY, WALK AWAY

Do you remember the woman
Who bumped into the door by accident and hit her arm?
She had a big bluish mark on her forearm.
“What happened to your arm?” asked a concerned friend.
“I accidentally dashed against the door,” replied she.
Her mind went over the humiliation of being beaten repeatedly.
“Walk away, walk away before it’s too late.”

Do you remember the woman,
Who often let her hair down which fashionably covered one eye?
On closer look that side of the eye was black and blue.
Before anybody asked, she offered,
“I got hit by a ball while watching a children’s game.”
She cried helplessly, thinking of the love of her parents.
“Walk away, walk away before it’s too late”.

Do you remember the woman who walked with a limp?
Her hip was in so much pain. She could barely walk.
“What happened to you?”
“I felled down in the bathroom”.
On being asked if she had gone to the doctor,
she hastily replied, “Yes, yes, I called that healer from that village.
The instant reply casting shadows.

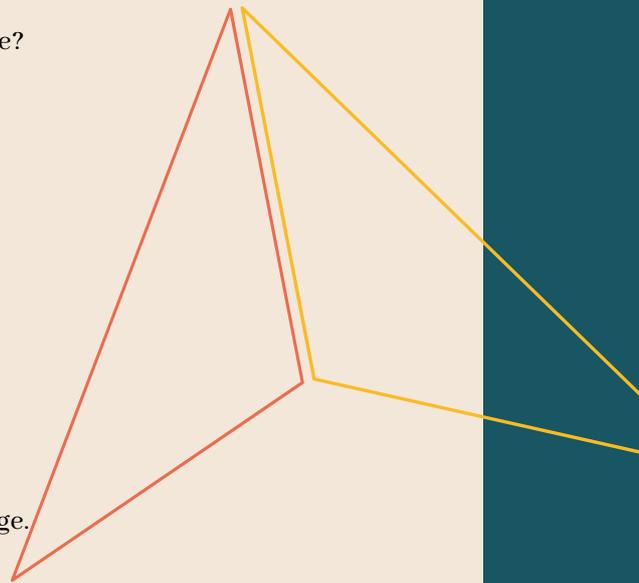
She took out her x-ray report behind closed door,
And looked at the fractured bone and her heart felt dead.
“Walk away, walk away before it’s too late.”

Do you remember the time the woman who wore
A ‘purple necklace’ around her throat?
“Walk away, walk away before it’s too late.”

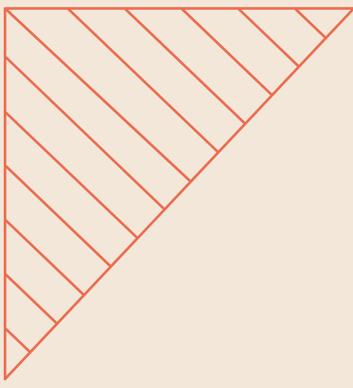
One day, she finally let out a long gut-wrenching cry.
The searing sob that always stopped below her heart came out,
Like a dam overflowing its bank.
She cried for herself. She cried for other thousands more.

Trade fear for hope. Make your small courage count.
Bear your own witness.
Don’t be too harsh on yourself. It’s not your fault.

When you stand up, speak out, other ten more,
Will have the courage to stand up and speak out.
“Walk away, walk away before it’s too late.”



Achingliu Kamei is a short story writer, poet, and an ultra-runner. Several of her poems are published in anthologies and journals like 'The Looking Glass Anthology', 'Insulatus' and in 'International journal Setu', 'The Little Journal', 'Melbourne Culture Corner', 'Poetry pea journal of Haiku and Senryu', 'Imphal Free Press', 'Borderless Journal' and other places. She is currently residing in Delhi.



Edward Lee

Your Hair In My Hands

Your mother gave me your hair, braided tightly and secured at either end with small blue hairbands, from your first haircut when you were a child many years before. It was blonde, brightly so, surprisingly so, because for all the years I had known you your hair had been dark, the closest it came to brightness being when you dyed it red because you knew that was my favourite colour of hair, a fact I revealed to you as we stood in front of Gustav Klimt's *The Kiss* in the Belvedere museum in Vienna, our first holiday as a couple with the words 'I love you' bright and fresh on our lips. It was soft too, your tightly braided length of hair, soft like I had never known any hair, before or since, to be soft, not even your hair during our years together when barely a day would pass when it did not pass through my fingers, the tangible whisper of it sliding across my skin.

It was the morning of our wedding and your mother had tears in her eyes as she handed me your hair, telling me that it was right that I should have it, I who was about to be your husband. I took it in my hand, holding it gently as I would a small animal, and thanked her, those two words quivering as though I too would soon have tears in my eyes, then we left for the church where you and I would exchange our vows in front of friends and family, the day forever captured in photographs and memory.

I still have your hair, all these years later, though I no longer have you. I, a fool, cruelly - so very cruelly, acid filling my chest as I think of it now - discarded you because I thought my heart belonged to someone who I had loved in the teen years of my life, their reappearance in my life like a gift from the past, youth and first love returned at a time when age was turning the edges of my life grey and heavy, only realising my mistake when it was too late, the chamber of your heart that I used to occupy visibly closed off as we stood in front of a judge who nullified the words we had spoken so many years before in front of our friends and family, your eyes passing across me as though I were nothing more than a stranger to you, not even someone you had once known let alone loved.



I hold it now, your hair, so alive and soft in my hand, its blondness bright through my blurred eyes, discarded as I have been myself – a fitting punishment, perhaps, an eye for an eye, a broken heart for a broken heart? – years after I realised my terrible mistake, years – too many years - in which I held onto this old love newly known because I had sacrificed so much to know it. Not long after my own discarding – was the pain you felt similar to the pain I felt, so savage and cruel and almost mocking? - I came across your hair in boxes long unopened, moving from a house no longer my home, the door closing behind me quick enough to touch the edge of my heel and send a vibration up my body that felt like a shiver of instinctive warning, or perhaps an echo of what had gone before, the hard shock of betrayal that lay deep in my pain as I imagine it lay deep in yours. I think of calling you – I remember your phone number even years after I last dialled it - to see if you would like it back, your hair from your first haircut so many years ago. I think of that, of calling you, and try not to imagine the answer I deserve.

Edward Lee's poetry, short stories, non-fiction and photography have been published in magazines in Ireland, England and America, including The Stinging Fly, Skylight 47, Acumen, The Blue Nib and Poetry Wales. He is currently working on a novel.

He also makes musical noise under the names Ayahuasca Collective, Orson Carroll, Lego Figures Fighting, and Pale Blond Boy.

His blog/website can be found at <https://edwardmlee.wordpress.com>

Kit Terrell

In The Wind

I have to walk slowly
I'll rattle the cabinets inside my chest
The wind is soft, for now
It'll rustle the grass out of my head

I wish there were more light
It'll catch the glint of a creatures eye
The path is rarely walked
I'll call out to the sky if I have the breath

In the night there is phantom music
I've heard a voice bouncing off the wind
In the night there is a loneliness
I can't find it in me to trust the voice in the wind

In the day there is warmth
I've melted under the glare of scorn before
In the day there is balance
I can't remember which direction I was going

Never

I feel adrift in a room in the air with no doors
I think this is the future
That will never be true again
I feel pulled along a track, a game with rules

I taste ice cream
Sausage and pasta
I think this is the past
I taste my misery in doses like medicine

I hear music playing over and over
I'm afraid I'm writing to myself
Words are oxygen given and taken by different lungs
I feel diseased

Words are trees standing by waiting for nothing
Words are forks twirling relief from depression
I feel hollow, crumpled
I want this to never be true again

Thank you to all our lovely contributors for their support and submissions, and to everyone taking the time to read all these amazing poems and stories we receive!

As always we would like to acknowledge the original custodians of the land we live and work upon, and pay our respect to all indigenous peoples past and present.

**MCC
IX**