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## Introduction

To be a Kansas poet, or a poet writing anywhere in the Midwest, is often a strange disposition between the urban and the natural. We enjoy the company of others, but certainly appreciate our wide-open spaces. Our seasons are as unpredictable as our politics; I can never assume the outcome on any given day. We are enjoying a real fall this year, one full of color and fire, jacket-weather.

Our Wichita poetry community is growing. I recently had the privilege of participating in *Epistrophe*, a lovely collaborative event we hope to continue for years to come. Poets would read their poems twice, the first time so the musicians could ‘hear’ the words. On the second recitation, musicians accompanied the reading. This synergistic connection between the improvisation musicians and the poets created an energy I’ve rarely felt. But it also emphasized that poets don’t exist in isolation. We’re in constant exchange with the world around us, and this relationship permeates and feeds our creative output.

The poems included in this issue resonate with that oft ephemeral exchange, reworking event and memory, wrestling with sound and meaning. It’s a feast we hope you enjoy.

*April Pameticky*

**Pat Beckemeyer**

*5 Poems*

**Family**

My family was like a jar of grasshoppers.  
We fed on each other.  
We ate each other alive.  
We wanted out.

It was not butterflies we wanted to be.  
Not anything that beautiful.  
Not anything that free.  
We just wanted out.

We were like a nest of wasps.  
Wanting to sting you, repeatedly,  
Until you died screaming.  
We fed on pain.

Hurtful. Hateful. Horrendous.  
Speaking was meant to draw blood.  
To make it flow freely, forever, fatally.  
To have pain is to feel.

We were like cicadas, screaming at night.  
Empty shelves of selves littered our tree.  
We thought this would free us,  
But hornets ate us at our birth.

Repeatedly trying to emerge,  
We became trapped forever crumbling.  
Seeing no way free from our tree,  
We screamed like sirens in the night.

## Rifles

Walking in the open, frozen, field,  
Freed for the night from driven golfers.  
My dog running frenetically beside me,  
Frantic to keep her feet unfrozen,  
Running like a yearling deer.  
She leaps and swirls under starlight.

Sounds like rifle shots signal danger.  
She stops in mid-leap landing solid.  
What are these snapping sniper sounds  
Mysteriously magnified in frozen stillness?  
Suddenly I halt to try and see  
What danger exists to the dog and me.

Tree trunks around me are splitting,  
Some down the middle as if axed.  
Other limbs are smaller, but bigger  
than a man hewn in the prime of life.  
Falling ice is taking them down  
It is in frozen water that they drown.

## **Fair-Haired Girl**

I longed to be the fair-haired girl  
straight blonde hair to her shoulders  
flipping and swirling as she turned her head  
perfect figure pirouetting through time  
as she was thrown into the air  
landing softly like a sparrow on a branch

my fate was to have unruly brown tangles  
a body that couldn't balance to flip  
longing for what I couldn't have  
nevertheless, I swirled through time  
shining like a star without a moon  
twinkling as a beacon so they could see  
what they really wanted was a girl like me

## Time

*“Time and tide wait for no man”  
—Ancient phrase, origin unknown,  
predates modern English*

Sometimes I wish that you were near me  
At that time when you are quite far away

Nighttimes when my body aches to feel thee  
At bedtime when my heart is cold and gray

Timeless nights when you are not by my side  
My timer is set for when you return

Many the times when all I've done was cried  
Until the timer chimes, call my name “Yearn”

I'm on timeout from all that fills my soul  
My days are timeworn, and sleep is not found

May you return in time to make life whole  
Meantime my heart will beat, but make no sound

Come back to me in a timely manner  
Until that time I will need no *Amor*

## **I Pretend**

I swim a lap back to the end.  
My legs feel peaceful when they bend.  
Full-length today I can extend.  
Oh, I pretend. Oh, I pretend.

But when I walk these legs offend,  
don't always do as I intend.  
In the water I can transcend.  
Oh, I pretend. Oh! I pretend!

**H.B. Berlow**

*1 Poem*

### **Do That Jazz Poem**

The cigarette is burning down almost to my fingers  
And I'm worried that I may not be able to tap-tap  
out a proper be-bop beat,  
so fast, so sweet  
with a whiskey burn that comes from the street.

With sweat pouring down over the keys,  
I'm unable to unlock the door to  
The secret revelations.  
There is the heartening cry for more, Please!,  
Give us your spiritual sensations.

We want, we want, we want that  
Proper be-bop beat. But I can't give  
you no more, when you're sitting on my hands.  
Your unrealistic demands plead and pour  
through me like altruistic sweat.

I want to ride; I want to fly like a bird,  
sacred in the sky, burnt out on the ground.  
I want to go my way with pride,  
Long angling stride,  
And so so far away from the lost and found.

You want me to do that thing,  
slender reed or plucking on an A-string.  
But I don't do for you like you don't do for me  
Because you can't see through my eyes  
And never will.

You want me to do, to do, to do  
to myself what I cannot do to you.  
And if I go (or if I stay)  
What will you say to me? Stay or go?  
No. The time is ripe for a proper be-bop beat.

Listen! Sit! Yes, have a seat and I will  
tell you a different story.  
Keep your eyes open and alive while I  
strive to reminisce. Just a little kiss  
to put you to sleep

and then I'll slip out into the night.  
Wide awake the next morning, a fright  
comes into your heart. What seems  
to be a vanishing act  
was only just a dream.

## David Cook

### *2 Poems*

#### **Makings**

I meander from bin to pile to table.  
as I collect bits and pieces and  
scraps and fragments of this and that,  
an armload, more or less, at a time

and cart my loads to my small space,  
a couple of feet on a table in a room of  
long tables, in a workshop of collage creation.

Among it I've got a faded piece of pink corduroy fabric,  
scraps of printed material, newspaper and maps,  
bits of twig and wrinkly leaf, all  
next to a tray of tubes of acrylic paint.

Call it makings.  
The workshop leader suggested  
bits and pieces of  
whatever strikes you.

The tubes of acrylic paint, and a piece of hardboard,  
come from a friend, along with paint brushes  
and a palette knife I was told I might find some use for: perhaps.  
First I handle the brushes, one at a time.

All feel too heavy or too light, none quite right.  
Then I heft the palette knife. I like its feel. So  
I open tubes of paint and squeeze colors,  
blues, reds, yellows, greens, on a scrap of paper.

And with the knife, I smear colors, a little of each of several,  
here and there on the hardboard, and press bits of  
fabric, newspaper, map, twig and leaf into  
bits of paint. The printed pieces go on sideways.

I tweak the bits and pieces around with the knife.  
And tweak, and tweak, and tweak some more. Tug pieces  
on top of each other, see how they look, move them  
around, cock my head and look, smear more color.

Mix more colors on the hardboard, smear it around,  
and stop and look for what to do next, and  
realize it's done.

## A Shadow

When we found him,  
lying gowned and looking lonely,  
in that hospital bed,

and he sat up and reached  
and clutched my arm  
and held me tight and  
cocked his head

and made the noises,  
all gummed and garbled,

that were what he could manage  
from the hole  
that was what was left  
of his mouth,

of what had once been  
half his lower jaw,  
lost to lip cancer years before,

I listened close for meaning.

For greeting.

Then behind me I heard talk  
between Mom and a nurse.

*He's been stroking since yesterday  
Likely doesn't recognize you.*

So that bright light in his eyes  
and his head cocked just so

meant nothing

and that tight grip on my arm  
was just an empty clutching.

**Arlice W. Davenport**

*2 poems*

**Orange, Blue**

1.

I will baptize the sky  
with new waters,  
washing the Birger Sandzen pink  
from the clouds.

Cattle reject the reflection in farm ponds.  
Trees turn their backs to the horizon and bow.

Indigo night. Angular lights in the distance:  
Freight train roars. Empty cars  
headed northward.

2.

I will baptize the Earth  
with new fire,  
scorching stubble and sod  
from the Plains.

Cattle nudge clods of dirt for sweet tendrils.  
Trees shape words but can no longer spell.

Charcoal cairns point the way to deep furrows.  
Growing pains. Orange flames  
headed nowhere.

3.

I will baptize my heart  
with new poetry,  
spilling villanelles  
into my veins.

Cattle low for soft yodels from cowboys.  
Trees sashay to the solos of birds.

*Rosy-fingered dawns* in my songs? I sail elsewhere.  
Orange, blue. Twilight hues  
headed homeward

## Cluny

French revolutionaries guillotined God at Cluny, but He exacted His tithe all the same: one-tenth of their bad ideas tossed back at them. The tyranny of terror, cheap dream of heaven, in ruins.

A vast emptiness swamps the nave; stumps of pillars stained black and gray and black again by age and rain and blood. Only one tower stands intact. I scan the burnished hills behind it; they do not look back.

“The birth throes of liberty,” cried Thomas Jefferson. “Rejoice!” Despots toppled; authority crippled for a future that never comes. Terror and waste; waste and terror. The desolation of faith.

On the tiny town square, a high-tech bistro beams. Lights surge behind the bar, sending out distress signals of the mind: the throb of synapses firing wildly in the wind. *Material infinity.*

Old men saunter in to down a beer, and harness their dogs under tables. Parents and students slurp pricey shots of caffeine. *Emancipated energy.* Above the din, they cannot hear the Earth’s foundation crack.

Freedom leaves a sacred void in its wake, watered by the blood of worldly martyrs. On the menu: *égalité, fraternité*, fissure and ruin. Thunder in the hills. Words crash around us like cannonballs.

*Liberté* lingers outside in the municipal lot. A van propped up on wooden blocks for the night. No hassles, man. *Free parking.* Let’s hoist another beer to Robespierre. His dog strains at its leash.

## **John Dorsey**

*2 Poems*

### **On a Lazy Summer Day**

dead skin scatters  
like dandelion seeds  
across the hilltop  
& i think about the year  
i turned 12

about the 2 teenage girls  
who were abducted  
& killed walking home  
from the video arcade  
near my grandmother's house

it was all over the news

that was the summer  
my mother ran out of quarters  
because playing pacman felt dangerous

& the other kids who walked by that street  
would swear up & down  
that there were ghosts  
guiding them home to safety

i think about how  
i wanted to be out there  
walking a thin line  
amongst the spirits

about how we do things just because  
we want to belong to something

to anything

that makes us believe  
in magic.

## **A Ghost is an Unforgiving River**

at forty-one  
i've learned that we're only as fast  
as what we can outrun

that my legs were rubber bands  
in another life  
the product of a war  
i'll never win

a foreign body of water  
an unforgiving river

memories only immigrate  
to other parts of the brain

other borders of the heart  
that never close

blood rarely changes course

rarely does the right thing

when you expect it to.

**Lael Ewy**

*3 Poems*

**Bad Sign**

*for Kathleen*

When you first read my cards,  
the Tarot deck turned up the devil,  
grinning, a hard red, then death,  
a black shadow and a half-moon scythe.  
Change, you said, as my face paled,  
not death, necessarily.  
Then the hippie at the truck stop,  
on my way back from Hesston,  
I was filling my tank. He read:  
the devil, dapper red, clicking hoofed feet,  
and death, pale-skulled,  
his scythe reflecting moonlight.  
Entrapment, he said, addiction.  
Did I know where to score some weed?

At the Kwik Shop,  
floating through the parking lot,  
a playing card, the etched back curled with age.  
I pick it up. Through hard red dirt:  
the Ace of Spades.

## The Unbearable Hardness of Grain

It is a performance art,  
wailing along, the sickle-bars  
chiming, the great wheel of a header  
out front with frilly fingers gathering,  
the old flathead six a few feet behind  
my head singing out a racket. I skim  
the field with scant inches to spare,  
hope not to run the platform into  
the washout, hope to avoid a pricey  
crunch and thump of metal on dirt.

The land, no matter how one plows,  
will yield what it will. One can  
manipulate it a bit, push up more  
here or there with a shot of ammonia,  
a dusting of Roundup. But the land  
conspires with wind and rain and sun,  
a constant but fickle affair. Fine then,

grow what you'll grow: I'll be here  
to cut it, to mow down your lax, spindly  
little stalks or your heads so full they nod  
all the same—whether you're brown  
and mean or every acre gold, bunched  
kernels knotting together and clogging  
my machine. The dust that packs  
my nose with snot, the fair haze  
that itches every inch, it smells,  
it feels in every squirming cinch,  
like heaven.

## Picking the Straws Out

We picked the straws out  
from between the sickle bars and the cylinder  
one by one, me with my pen-knife's dull blade,  
my blind uncle with a small flathead screwdriver.

The points of our tools stuck in the combine's heart;  
beneath, we'd removed a panel, worked  
our fingers up and under in an awkward squat.

The advantage was his, feeling his way, deft, into the dumb  
steel of the machine, while I tried desperately to see.

**Daniel Herbert**

*2 Poems*

**October in Missoula, Montana**

Heaps of it, coming down in crystals. They say the clouds are millions of tons heavy, that their mass could crush us, drown us in the frozen drop of winter. Then they graciously fall so slowly, so that we may dodge them carefully, and brush their mass off our fall jackets, so unprepared. First a highlight in the fields, and the brushstroke of a steady hand across the frostline on the mountains. One tree mere feet below the another, graciously green, laughing at the one above suddenly trapped in winter. Like the frosted alpine trees, flakes fall on the school girl's lashes, and she blinks them away, brushes them off on her way into the building. Once pass the jamb, she looks at her purple jacket to find a fossil there, a melting remembrance of a great weight come to earth. A great force no longer lifted. The frozen sky come to rest on wool. She might try to draw it later, but for now she stares as it sinks into lilac warmth, a moment for her own. Every unique branch of it reaching out. Every individuality melting into the end of autumn. We cannot know if all are unique, but at least all are not the same.

## **Productivity**

Sitting is for those who watch the world go on by and here he is sitting, when all the world goes before him, beyond his control. It is for the lonely, the lazy, the dying. He watches the balloon man, twisting and tying, the shrieks of latex, matching the tones of the children on their school trip. Surely there is another place he could be, rather than sitting in this din-soaked air, what displeasure. He turns his attention to the busker sitting across the way, drumming some foreign song, the tapping of some stretched out skin, contrasting the flab of his own. All strung out and focused, what ruckus, what terrible aesthetic. Where is his home to rest in peacefully, white walls and neutral tones? Would he not prefer the soothing sounds of a 45 spinning some fresh mid- century croon? Crisp, clean, and concise to this concrete slab, to the pigeons stirring? There's a big dark cloud moving in, he will be rained on if he does not move, he will be wet and unsettled. As my dog seeks a place to relieve himself, I ask him, "Don't you see the storm coming in?" He answers with a question, grinning up at the sky, "Don't you?"

## Justin Meyer

### *4 Poems*

#### Winter

Guaraldi dances on the keys  
as though every tree were an evergreen.  
A mopsy sheen covers the pond and  
the herald spouts off warm greetings  
to paint the scene like Kincade.

One prefers to analyze the sky beneath  
foggy glasses and with  
rosy cheeks.  
Another may lick lips  
and cold poles  
to prove the scientists wrong.

I am a scientist, as I glance down at my woolen glove  
collecting tiny particles of cloud dust.

The ridges  
so unlike the mounds  
a razors edge

## Attention

I wish to contain  
the many drops of silver rain  
just beyond the porch.

The pastel colors muted yellow in the light  
beaming in my memory  
and heaping on to previous places  
to secret grottos

Your hair is matted down  
by the smattering  
of future plants and pools.

Too long, now, in the grotto,  
I fear the rain has passed us by.

## **The Best Days of Your Life**

Inevitable  
as the vine stretches to sunlight.  
Fair follicles mark the maturation of a man.

Bristles thick-  
scratched by the thumb  
and index finger  
in the late evening  
huddled over the typewriter  
and now the pocket screen.

The world around him grows  
in less familiar ways  
as he mourns the loss of old stages,  
his precious plays.  
He may plead for a new set of genes that fit  
while the old ones go to waste.

How much of him is scattered among the clouds?  
How spacious am I?

## Things We Pretend to Own

Tame the lion of grandeur  
before the cart tumbles over and spills  
the day's wages  
over pebbled pieces.

The sediment sings sweetly  
as pennies prance along the surface.

Our faces  
glowing  
in spite of a painful landing  
and the harsh reality of cobblestone.

**Steven Sassmann**

*3 Poems*

*\*Sassman is considered a graphic text poet, so JPEG images of the poems follow each of the poems in their preferred format.*

**Distillation**

She painted with words  
little pictures of time  
charity's mixed blessing  
mimes a crime of paradigm  
little riddle in the middle  
hiding sly behind the rhyme  
we could always almost see it  
but if's too far to climb  
barely half of an hypothesis  
sprung from a lucky guess  
brighteyed rainwashed cleanfaced  
naked truth from muddy mess  
from down last down deep down  
back way on down past past  
up the secret up steps up  
beyond the far up forward fast  
an apple grape or apricot  
she swings us low the vine  
with paintings of words  
little pictures of time  
the bee stings it sweet  
but she makes it wine

**DISTILLATION**

she painted with words  
little pictures of time  
charity's mixed blessing  
mimes a crime of paradigm  
little riddle in the middle  
hiding sly behind the rhyme  
we could always almost see it  
but if's too far to climb  
barely half of an hypothesis  
sprung from a lucky guess  
brighteyed rainwashed cleanfaced  
naked truth from muddy mess  
from down last down deep down  
back way on down past past  
up the secret up steps up  
beyond the far up forward fast  
like apple grape or apricot  
she swings us low the vine  
with paintings of words  
little pictures of time  
the bee stings it sweet  
but she makes it wine

## Once Were Stars

We are woven in the fabric of the day  
sparkling strands of stardust suspended  
in sunrays in a picture window  
like our cigarette smokes  
twine in silent change  
slow drift surprise  
we thread a design  
plaited here in silence  
into the pattern of time  
the warp and weft of arms  
we're knit into the sweetness  
i'm spun in the siren hunger  
trembling in her smile  
a child is coming

## ***ONCE WERE STARS***

*we are woven into the fabric of the day  
sparkling strands of stardust suspended  
in sunrays in a picture window  
like our cigarette smokes  
twine in silent change  
slow drift surprise  
we thread a design  
plaited here in silence  
into the pattern of time  
the warp and weft of arms  
we're knit into the sweetness  
I'm spun in the siren hunger  
trembling in her smile  
a child is coming*

## Flowerchild

is life a song  
climbing the mountains of sky  
swimming the light of the moon  
high in the blue light of dawn  
drunk on the red light in dusk  
i harvest the grains of the wind  
back back across the many-rivered sea  
surfing the tidecurrent season  
we leap through the horizon  
we sing across the countryside abloom  
each blossom more beautiful than last  
freshet choirs of petals pollen nectars  
the egg the seed the germ sing life  
tomorrow demanding today but  
i feel the tug of the Polestar back  
the shift of light  
calling my children  
home

## ***FLOWERCHILD***

*is life a song  
climbing the mountains of sky  
swimming the light of the moon  
high on the bluelight in dawn  
drunk on the red of the dusk  
i harvest the grains of the wind  
back back across the many-rivered sea  
surfing the tidecurrent season  
we leap through the horizon  
we sing across the countryside abloom  
each blossom more beautiful than last  
freshet choirs of petals pollen nectars  
the egg the seed the germ sing life  
tomorrow demanding today but  
i feel the tug of the pole star back  
the shift of the light  
calling my children  
home*

**Janet Stotts-Jenkins**

*2 Poems*

**Carlene Goes to Church**

Yes, yes, I'm praying.  
Can't you see my folded hands?  
What, you don't like my expression?  
Well, I don't give a good God damn.

Why? I'll tell you why.  
The last thing I need is another  
man, telling me what to do.

I already answer to my father,  
who tells me not to drink  
to my husband, who tells me what to think,  
to my preacher, who tells me not to sin,  
to my boss, who tells me what I got to do  
for him if I want to keep my job  
which he knows I got to do,  
'cause my husband can't keep his.

But, still I'm praying, for all the good  
it has done my in the past.

I prayed my mother's cancer  
would be cured. It wasn't,  
so I planned her funeral  
and I accepted.

I wanted to go to college, so  
I prayed not to get pregnant,  
but I did. So, I accepted.

Then, I prayed that my poor,  
damaged baby would live,  
but it didn't.

Now, we're living in our car  
'cause the bank took our  
house to pay the hospital  
for the days they kept my  
poor girl alive, while  
telling me, it was hopeless.  
Hell, I knew that.  
But I couldn't accept it.  
I couldn't tell them to pull

the plug on my gallant  
girl with a two chambered  
heart who kept on fighting.

I tried to make a bargain  
with You, God. If only You  
would honor her fight  
to stay alive, for one more  
day, for one more after that,  
and yet another and another,  
until I could find acceptance,  
If You did that, I would return  
to the church and pray  
to You, once a day for  
every day she lived.

But God you are hard, cold  
and uncaring, you didn't keep  
your part of the bargain,  
but I am keeping mine.  
So here I am, on my knees  
before a statue with  
a bleeding heart, praying  
to You, God, once a day  
for each day my baby lived.  
Then, when my part of the  
bargain is fulfilled,  
I'm going to join my girl,  
wherever she is,  
whatever is in store.  
God, don't look for me in death,  
I'm not coming to Your door.

## **A More Innocent Time**

His long plaid arm snaked around my waist, and took the reins from my hands, signaling my ride was almost over. The coming unwelcome routine was the price I paid to ride. “Just lean back on me,” his redneck voice requested, but I stayed rigidly upright. Undeterred, his calloused hand explored my t-shirt finding two small hillocks.

A brief, unspoken war was conducted at a bone-jarring trot. I pushed his hand down; it crept up again. At 10, I was too naïve to feel threatened, but an instinctual unease was confirmed when his hand dropped each time Dad’s dusty ’52 Chevy drove down the gravel road.

The redneck and his horse disappeared amid a roiling cloud of whispers at summer’s end. I asked my dad where he was, and his face went white and pinched, a Welsh danger sign I heeded. Later, I hung back, unnoticed, while Dad relayed second hand gossip about the man’s trial to Uncle Earl. The words “molestation” and “predator” were awkward in Dad’s mouth, and unknown to me, but I didn’t care if the man went to jail. I broke cover to ask “What happened to his horse?”

## *Contributing Poets*

**Pat Beckemeyer** has been writing poetry with a group of local Wichita poets who have met weekly for nine years. Her poetry has won awards in recent Kansas Authors Club contests and appears in the anthology *To the Stars Through Difficulties: A Kansas Renga in 150 Voices* (Mammoth Press).

**H.B. Berlow** studied film-making and creative writing at the University of Miami in the 80s, was involved in the Boston Poetry Scene in the 90s, and was the former president of the Kansas Writer's Association from 2012 to 2013. The historical crime fiction series, *Ark City Confidential* and *Secrets of the Righteous*, published through The Wild Rose Press, is currently available on Amazon.

**David Cook** is a new voice in River City circles, published previously in *Broadsides*. He has written poetry, mostly narrative free verse, for about five years starting from a creative writing course and two workshops.

**Arlice W. Davenport** was 17 in a high school English class when he read "In Just-" by E.E. Cummings. He was amazed at how words could bounce and skip and zing across the page, and how a poet could twist and turn spacing, punctuation and syntax to make a meaning that was intentional, straight from the heart. He knew that was what he wanted to do with language, too, and has been writing poetry ever since--although he admits that his poetic forms and sensibilities have matured beyond a 17-year-old's awe. Still, that awe sticks with Davenport. His work, including a paean to "In Just-," can be found at <https://allpoetry.com/arliced>

**John Dorsey** lived for several years in Toledo, Ohio. He is the author of several collections of poetry, including *Teaching the Dead to Sing: The Outlaw's Prayer* (Rose of Sharon Press, 2006), *Sodomy is a City in New Jersey* (American Mettle Books, 2010), *Tombstone Factory*, (Epic Rites Press, 2013), *Appalachian Frankenstein* (GTK Press, 2015) *Being the Fire* (Tangerine Press, 2016) and *Shoot the Messenger* (Red Flag Press, 2017). He is the current Poet Laureate of Belle, MO. His work has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize. He may be reached at [archerevans@yahoo.com](mailto:archerevans@yahoo.com)

**Lael Ewy** is a writer, editor, and Lecturer in English at Wichita State University. His work has run the gamut from writing curriculum for Kansas' peer specialist training program to writing poems for *Denver Quarterly*, *New Orleans Review*, and others. He is the OnWords commentator for KMWU, Wichita's public radio station and the editor and co-founder of *EastWesterly Review*, an online journal of literary satire at [www.postmodernvillage.com](http://www.postmodernvillage.com).

**Daniel Herbert** currently conducts 12, 13, and 14 year-olds in choir class on a daily basis. He walks his dog in the dark at 5 AM before his Riverside street even notices him. Coming down from a series of years involving decisions he would prefer to label "brave" and a life near wild Montana mountains, his return to Wichita would seem almost regimented in contrast. Yet, a well-lived life and the people surrounding it still fascinate Daniel, and his work is increasingly focused on the insights of children, the inevitable relation of nature's cycles to man's history, paradox, and an overwhelming desire to escape at all times.

**Justin Meyer** is a musician, writer, and teacher. He is a graduate of Friends University with a B.A. in Music and Christian Spiritual Formation. Justin teaches piano lessons through Air House Academy in Wichita and enjoys writing songs in his spare time.

**Steven Sassmann** is the author of seven books of poems and poetry. His next book will be out in Spring 2019 from Spartan Press. His is published in magazines like *Chiron Review*, and in anthologies like *Men in the Company of Women*, by online magazines like *Wingposse Art*, and has done a series of poems on High Plains Public Radio. Steven has evolved a new style of poetry which uses large font Interior Titles, innovative punctuation and color. He aims for brevity and wit, and favors content over style and form. He draws a distinction between poems and poetry and usually writes unintentionally. He writes for the nonAcademic—who may need poetry most. He lives in Smith Center, Kansas with his wife, Mary.

Samples of his style can be seen in his Facebook Photo Album: Big Red-  
[https://www.facebook.com/steven.sassmann/media\\_set?set=a.10212229604568966&type=3](https://www.facebook.com/steven.sassmann/media_set?set=a.10212229604568966&type=3)  
or in the Album: A Series in Red-  
[https://www.facebook.com/steven.sassmann/media\\_set?set=a.10209246844241822&type=3](https://www.facebook.com/steven.sassmann/media_set?set=a.10209246844241822&type=3)

**Janet Jenkins-Stotts** has self-published a novel *The Orchid Garden*, and a chapbook, *Winter's Yield*. Her poems have been published in *Kansas Voices*, *Konza Journal*, *River City Poetry*, *Dash*, *Passager* and the Swedish underground journal, *Devote*. She lives in Topeka, KS. with her husband and their min-pin, Romeo.