

# Spring: The Journal of the E. E. Cummings Society

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## More Poems

Margaret Roncone

Yannis Livadas

Guy R. Beining

Gerald Locklin

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## Called what we stand

Yannis Livadas

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The word or the sentence  
That solves everything  
Is there

Undesirable enough  
Sufficient as an end  
Whether harmonized in completeness  
In boredom

Destroys the fortitude  
One called  
What we stand for.

—*Paris, France*

## Two Poems

Margaret Roncone

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I fall in love with a photo of E.E. Cummings in a *New Yorker* magazine while in the waiting room of an ophthalmologist's office

it's black and white  
he's looking intently  
away from the camera at  
a parade of lower case 'i's  
a hyphenated world  
linear time and rhyme  
disappear in a desert  
of white stallions  
my eyes balloon  
at handsome  
i need to nestle in his  
supra sternal notch  
feel his swallows  
as they gather  
on telephone wires  
stretched  
from limb  
to beautiful  
limb.

## Dry Dock

You were not the same after  
the shoelaces unknotted everything  
you held dry at high tide

you believed ravens crushed  
the souls of night watchmen  
under their wings

you had the world convinced  
of a falsehood you carried  
(a fistful of shattered mirror)

the blood you drew  
from you those pale thin arms  
was anemic, still blue.

—*Vashon Island, Washington*

## Seven Poems

Guy R. Beining

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### cave

have something to  
put on ice  
rare breathing this  
morning caught in  
canope of a  
fringed society exporting  
its wealth for fat  
unable to test  
the waters of  
other spheres burning  
inside tiny screens.

### fall

1.  
slipping thru  
a rib  
of light  
taking tickets for  
an anatomy spent

2.  
in nimbostratus  
wake  
iron works of  
bells  
lean forward.  
thru mist &  
salt the eyes  
disappear.

3.  
hoarfrost, what?  
the arms of  
trees  
are darkly still.

## exploratory notes

### ill

what step?  
that step with  
a high resolution.  
wing span copying  
the buzzard, then  
vulture with an  
earned history,  
flapping dark madness  
over town dump,  
eyes on fire  
of cinders,  
somewhere it smells  
the scent of  
letters burning.

### ran

1.  
between jars of  
honey, rushing to  
catch light, the  
head rebounds in  
shadows, & a wall  
full of knots.
2.  
electric wires were  
crossed & the earth was  
running out of gardens.  
a powdery light  
talked to statues  
in memory of debris,  
& in a corner  
of the eye  
there was a  
blank god.

## exploratory notes

### pit

1.  
askew, askew,  
the fire warned  
in the last  
stage of brittle  
words.

2.  
water up to  
the hemline,  
encircling an inner  
stillness as her  
lips gauged the  
wind velocity,  
& she whispered  
side bar, side bar  
as if this reflection  
equaled the floundered  
swordfish on her plate.

### dank

1.  
i will take  
you to the  
hairline fracture of  
a field scraping the  
grammar of tansies.

2.  
a mountain of  
time on a  
village green, &  
the practical church  
bench, seeing it  
slightly thru tree  
branches, still  
above everything is  
the priest's house,  
long white picket  
fence, nothing run  
of the mill.

3.  
how long do you  
brush your teeth  
in early light  
before mass, &  
the mask of psalms.  
green awaits with  
palm leaves & psalms,  
your palm back  
& forth holding  
the tooth brush,  
remembering part of a  
skirt caught on the fence.

### **Unfixed**

7/17/14  
dark

the sun,  
the blood of  
the sun in my eye,  
the left one,  
the one that  
sees the river,  
the stream,  
that sliver of rain  
shaving the horizon  
while the right  
eye dies, almost  
dead now, a  
heavy corpse that  
bulges & turns  
my head to the side.  
now the red eye  
burns & wants  
to die,  
& the mule  
in my left eye  
stops.

—Great Barrington, Massachusetts

## My Grand-Pop and His Progeny

Gerald Locklin

---

I've just turned 76 and it occurs to me  
That was about the age of Grandfather Locklin  
When I was beginning to reach the age  
At which I was beginning to get to know him.  
He was still a VERY BIG MAN, and strong not soft,  
So it was easy to believe, as I was told,  
That he had come down to Upstate New York  
From the logging industry of Ontario, Canada,  
Which must have involved some sort of crossing  
From the Canadian side of Niagara Falls  
To the American Fort Niagara. He seems to have  
Found employment easily as a Night Watchman  
A little easier and putatively safer  
Then "rollin' on the river" because he eventually  
Lived, as I remember it, to at least about eighty-five.

I have my own emotional connections with "Niagara"  
From being an Upstate Child of Rochester,  
Itself on the shores of Lake Ontario,  
On the former route of the Erie Canal,  
The former route of the Northern Segment  
Of the Hudson/Mohawk River, from NYC to  
Albany to Syracuse to Rochester to Buffalo  
And thence pouring mainly into Lake Erie.  
For some dumb reason it's always grounded  
My feeling of cousinhood with the editors of  
Slipstream Magazine and Press—  
Dan, Bob, and Livio—Catholic guys like myself—  
Who had founded and edited the literary mag  
At Niagara University, and continued it, post-graduation,  
As the Slipstream literary enterprises, which eventually  
Provided strong support to reams of poetry and fiction,  
Including my own, in Slipstream Magazine and Press,  
And even hosted many of us  
For readings and socializing, abetted by the literary librarian  
At the University of Buffalo, Michael Basinski. They  
Even produced a couple of films that I think can still  
Be accessed among the cinematic riches of You Tubes.

I remain, in these remaining years, eternally grateful  
To all of the above for discovering some kinship

With my often-a-bit-Rasputinish manuscripts  
As I raise them a toast from the grapes of the Appalachian  
Wine Country Plateau (though it be a few miles inland from  
The Greatest Lakes of America), home to the “table wines” of  
Many a Catholic Mass, rumored to have passed more than  
A few of the lips of Upstate Altar Boys who were to utter,  
In their later emanations, poems as deliberately commonplace  
As the all-embracing sensibilities of what I will take the liberty  
Of designating The Slipstream School of Unslipshod Poetics.

—Long Beach, California

## Two Poems

George Held

---

### Walking Stick

No, not the one  
the old lean on

but the one creeping  
along the lawn

on a hot summer day,  
the one wearing camos

like a grunt wriggling  
under barbed wire

looking for a leaf  
to eat.

### Grasshopper

Flies to pieces on the page  
in Cummings' poem,  
a typo(lexi)graphical trick.

Grasshopper  
hardly hops  
but flies in a whirr of wings

and when detained  
in the hand spits tobacco,  
or maybe marijuana.

—*New York, New York*

## Door County Haikus

Richard D. Cureton

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### Activities

So long summer sun!  
Flip-flops, fish-boils, ferries, fires:  
Footprints in the sand.

### Animals

Waves on a rock shelf;  
Raccoons, squirrels, porcupines;  
Music in the woods.

### Sun

Sunrise in the East.  
Something said and something done.  
Sunset in the West.

### Roads

Winding roads run down  
Through the woodlands to the lake.  
Trembling leaves turn up.

### Rowing

Blades on the water.  
Kick and pull and kick and pull.  
Swans on the lagoon.

### Birds

Three hungry thrushes:  
Black-eyed berries on red stems.  
Fall, with winter near.

### **Butterflies**

A white butterfly  
Feeding on four yellow flowers  
Says late summer's here.

### **House**

Steep stairs; white stone cliffs;  
Two green points, one bright blue bay;  
Red roof, railings, rain.

### **Winds/Weather**

South winds gust off shore.  
Silver days are soft, serene.  
North winds send us sun.

### **Cherry Trees**

Rows of red, blue sky.  
White taped tree trunks, mowed green grass.  
Cherry pits, then jam.

### **Sun**

Yellow wood, blue bay.  
Summer sunlight sinking south.  
Shadows on the shelf.

—*Ann Arbor, Michigan*

## Four Poems

Michael Dylan Welch

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### Anecdote of a Door

I have left my door a jar.  
I had thought to leave it my entire estate,  
but, according to my doctor, I'm not yet dead,  
so I've left it a jar.  
It's medium-sized and made of a cheap glass  
that used to hold pickles,  
or maybe marmalade.  
The label's been removed,  
the glue washed off,  
and now the jar sparkles in the sun  
with enough happy abandonment  
to please any of its former pickles  
—or maybe the marmalade, as the case may be.

The door is indifferent to my bequest.  
Thanks to the jar, it stands open,  
but would be equally ecstatic, in its droll, door-like way,  
to swing shut or be shut.  
Doors are like that, and open or close  
without judgment or delay,  
unless of course they are held open  
by a dead ficus or a corpse,  
or just a jar.

This particular door leads  
from my kitchen to the yard,  
where a small stoop overlooks  
a patch of Tennessee dirt and weeds that someone else might turn  
into a garden.  
I have neglected it,  
but my door, though wholly unappreciative,  
does have a jar of its very own.

While my door gives no thought to its jar,  
it is fully its owner.  
Sometimes the door leans up against it,  
or a passing gust bangs the door from the jar  
and curls cool air into the kitchen.  
Often the door pushes the jar aside and closes for the night,  
keeping out the cool.  
Mostly, I don't care what the door wants to do with its jar,  
but it would sadden me if it broke.  
As much as I adore the door,

I don't like pickles, or marmalade,  
and don't want to have to go through  
another jar.

So far,  
neither the door nor I have come unhinged.

## **Gary Snyder's Earring**

The photo of Snyder

at the bookstore  
shows him with pen in hand,  
contemplative,  
an earring in his left ear,  
that slight circle of silver.  
I want to ask him  
when he got his piercing,  
and why, and wonder  
too, if I should get one.

Perhaps I shouldn't assume  
it changed his life,  
as I think it would mine,  
gaining me some sort  
of hallowed admission  
to the beat old boys.  
Maybe Gary Snyder's earring  
was nothing more cathartic  
than combing his hair,  
nothing more than writing  
his next protest  
or meditation—  
no decoder ring needed  
for the club he's in.

When I was a boy  
only pirates had earrings,  
and not once  
did I ever dream

of being a pirate.

## E.E. Cummings Updates His Facebook Page

**Sunday:** Had freedom today for breakfast.

**Monday:** Just saw a falling leaf,felt onely.

**Tuesday:** Visiting postoffice, stepped in goddammed mudluscious.

**Wednesday:** Dinner with anyone tonight in a pretty how town.

**Thursday:** Like politicians,mostpeople on social media are arses upon which et cetera.

**Friday:** Never mind that feeling is first,got slapped today when i asked may i feel

**Saturday:** Finally remembered how to spell grasshopper.

## Bashō Updates His Facebook Page

**Monday:** Took a walk around the pond today to enjoy the spring sunshine. Heard a frog jump in. Thought I'd write a poem about it.

**Tuesday:** For centuries, poems about frogs have celebrated their croak, so writing about the sound of a frog jumping into the water seems pretty radical. Any of you homies think I should go for it anyway?

**Wednesday:** Go the last two lines down of my new poem: *kawazu tobikomu / mizu no oto*. But I'm stuck on my first line. Shoot me your suggestions if you've got any.

**Thursday:** Settled on *furuike ya* for my first line. Thanks, buddy, for the suggestion (you know who you are).

**Friday:** Decided against the frog legs for dinner.

—Sammamish, Washington