

THE CAMILANO REVIEW



What is it in us that frightens you so? Maybe that's not the right question. Maybe you are frightened by the fact that we even ask such questions of you, but nevertheless, let us ask you this one: what is it in you that is so frightening?

And this one as well: why are you so determined to control everything but your own desires?

— Robert G. Sherrin
“Still Life”

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CONTENTS

Preface	5	
<i>Watch</i>	7	Susan Zettel
Three Poems	23	Evelyn Lau
<i>The Sword Form, First Part</i>	27	Hillel Schwarz
<i>But Blue</i>	29	Kate van Dusen
<i>Protective Coloration of the Heart</i>	32	Betsy Struthers
<i>Full Moon This Night in January</i>	35	Gillian Harding-Russell
<i>Perspective</i>	38	Lucinda Harrison Coffman
<i>Siren</i>	49	Carel Moiseiwitsch
<i>Still Life</i>	65	Robert G. Sherrin

Notes Toward a Book of Photoglyphs 75 Roy Kiyooka

Pearagraphs 95 Fred Wah

Selected Bibliography 98 Roy Kiyooka

The Power Is There 101 George Bowering

Footnote from Cahuita 103 Gary Geddes

Provocations 111 Brian Fawcett

119 Contributors

COVERS

Siren

Carel Moiseiwitsch

Fred Wah / PEARAGRAPHS

On Roy Kiyooka's *Pear Tree Pomes*

A collection of pomace. Left over. Residue. Pome poem. Fruit, of looming back yard pear tree. Windowed lost love, seasoned symmetry of gaze. Words to hang onto, picked, plucked, pared, preserved. Or rain/frost-rotted brown on top of the camper.

Nest. Branch and sky for hair. Dream space where the eye-shaktra's rooted up prime before the mind's eye in growth rings fluttered flowered house of interlimb, mesh of mindingness, net work, nest work.

Some bright beam lights up behind the eyes, or through the greenery, truths of all sorts writing pang and time. Tall is as old is. That's a fact. Things to put a bite on, the bark. Getting to the char-core heart with word-worm tunneling. Put an ear to.

Low roar of shakuhachi waves. Enki drumming on the cedar. Hammered words said beep bent forgotten all but the ever-resonating thud even the paper-clean dry seed-head split and distant sound of frost released from brittle memory pod.

Old dogs of war words let loose as forkt birds slipping the private magic state into talking tree. Listen. Love words. Language paired and othered over the geographical heap, dangled from a canopy called earth-as-sky. Caw. Coo.

Facing the old yin-yang turbine round the night sky weaving its stars into the tree tops shade upon shadow questioning distance upon distant sites sign voice weather noting exed ever only spins plus minus minus minima plus.

After the throttle cutting of white inked into body along with the sigh of staining the world with the same body. What a river such tangible surfaces usher singing; its banks cut too with smells and other signs of shape or touch tuned with Meloids.

Word as seed preserve brings up the notion of rotten language composting for the progeneration of itself and the ripe vocable as soft and juicy palpable but for the bite of belief and the Bering Isthmus migration so far from the Cantonese pollen.

Chinatown walking through the food smelling and then sitting down in a booth to taste the birds nest soup or any noodle late night neon ragtime all alone in the dawn music Virgil's vigil down the street and home again home again.

Stirred-up word leaves equal to birds' startled whoosh and the morphophonetic fruiting of the great vowel shift(s) syllable canting the old prayer wheel so familiar as the resonating fat of the adjective, you know, like "Summertime".

The tropicism of allowing the range of stimulation (in this case, sky) and avoiding such an indicator as clarity of outline (that is, fingering it) puts the poet's nose to the wind so that bite has surface (in fall, that could mean frost).

Yes, there are a few of those brushes with sudden silence. The "great" hush. A slight stunning of the uttering tongue diverts to rainforest and you know OM is AM somewhere on the hermes dial. Even the trees wait, rooted.

Here the wickerwork of wonder prevails, especially seasonally, especially winter. Night turns too. That's when the griddle glows with answers, that's when the porch of stars or clouds twigs to the forecast, that's when the eyes get used to the dark.

This stoniness that comes to life, unfetters itself from heap by song and the crazy clicking of the compass needle from side to side, something ringing ahead, something diamond, vertebraeic, maybe something bonelike in the name.

Sometimes it's just word as a reflective buoy nunning and canning entrance to the (h)arbour. At others, smell's left to gauge place, especially in the morning. The ode as a jar for dead fingernails. Pears, breathing through their skin.

Here's the tree traveller with news from the roots. For the poet that's the "heavenly" one, the one growing down from above. Not just dream. The tune is reflective: the image of the tree shows a tree. Such is home and the authority of love.

The tree-talk hears preaction (ie, just thinking about it) as a plot to rejuvenate the locomotor birth-breath effect (you know, when the sap rises) because there always seems to be an un- or de- chat to simulate houseness.

Layered into west-coast leafery is another homing device between the legs for birds, rivers, salmon, spawning gravel, and smouldering midden heaps. All old time warm, damp copulas charting ocean's peaks to get some home again.

Mother tongue tongue-tied lost ungendered gendering potent cone-seed to burst birth in any chance fire only words green branching into childhood pink Eve's apple stuck in man's throat all forest foreign but for the pear tree.

Behind this tree-braille on the slivered moon-pear of a page is his "screech" and behind that some solitary hollering of the pome poem as proper, as in *proprio*, vessel for any world-preserved jar of memory keeps listening for.

Tell-tale leaf-light filtered photosynthetic compost haunted by the house syntax. Paper page so under the thinking thumb, but then the word baggage tsunamis forth and tosses, say, the persona of language's song which then just dangles and spins.

Ancientness moving in on the dream of falling. Air drama, into the earth. Leaf-word-paper-skin-mold, moist churnowing of a tongue once flowered container of the "well" sprung within body sapling dappled skylight seeded.

CONTRIBUTORS

GEORGE BOWERING, a Professor of English at SFU, travels and publishes widely. Roy Miki has just completed a 400 page annotated and illustrated bibliography of Bowering's published work, *A Record of Writing* (Talonbooks). Talonbooks has also recently published a re-issue of his first book of poems, *Sticks and Stones*. Bowering has just edited a collection of baseball stories called *Playing the Field*. The work in this issue is a continuation of a series on writing called *Errata* (Red Deer College Press 1988).

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ROY KIYOOKA, a Professor in the Fine Arts Department at UBC, is one of Canada's most prolific talents in a variety of media: sculpture, painting, photography and poetry. His *Pear Tree Pomes* (illustrated by David Bolduc) appeared from Coach House in 1987, and was short-listed for the Governor General's Award in 1988. The work in this issue is a meditation on the project he is currently working on which will appear as a special issue of *The Capilano Review* (#3) this Fall.

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KATE VAN DUSEN divides her time between Hornby Island, BC and Toronto. Her first book of poems, *Not Noir* was published by Coach House in 1987, and *But But* appeared from Underwhich Editions in 1988. The poems in this issue are from a work-in-progress titled *But Blue*, a long poem dedicated to the memory of bp Nichol.

FRED WAH currently teaches in the English Department of the University of Calgary. He has published several collections of poetry and won the Governor General's Award in 1986 for his book *Waiting for Saskatchewan* (Turnstone Press 1985). The work in this issue is a new installment of his on-going series, *Music at the Heart of Thinking*, the first collection of which appeared from Red Deer College Press in 1987. His most recent books are *Rooftops* (1988) and *Limestone Lakes: Utaniki* (1989), both from Red Deer College Press. He is currently at work on a series of poems about art titled *Art Knots*.

SUSAN ZETTEL was born in Kitchener, Ontario, and now lives in Ottawa. She is working on a collection of linked stories dealing with family relationships. "Watch" is a part of this collection.

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