

Contributors



Kelli Allen writes from a place where body and myth come together, often successfully. Her work asks readers to accept shades of possibility wherein wolves and witches meet college professors for long afternoon discussions about the integrity of the line. Naturally, the witches and professors say too much. The music is in the wolves' silence.

Allen's poems and stories have appeared in many journals and several national anthologies, for which she is grateful. She is currently an adjunct professor of English at Lindenwood University and Florissant Valley. Allen gives readings and teaches workshops throughout the US, but rarely comes across as funny as she really is. Her full-length poetry collection, *Otherwise, Soft White Ash*, is forthcoming from John Gosslee Books in October of 2012. Her website, featuring a real live poison dart frog, can be ogled here: www.kelli-allen.com.

Aaron Anstett admits he lost the name-your-worst-job contest to the woman who sold burial plots door-to-door, but maintains his single shift as a surgical garment laundry sorter ranked a close second. His collections are *Sustenance*, *No Accident*, and *Each Place the Body's*, and more recent work appears or is forthcoming in a number of journals, and a chapbook due out in 2013. He lives in Colorado with his wife, Lesley, and children.



Scott Brennan lives in Miami, Florida. His artwork has been featured in *Superstition Review*, *Anti-*, *Big Bridge*, *Unlikely Stories*, *Gypsy*, and elsewhere. The Boston Modern Orchestra commissioned his illustrations, and he created cover art for a number of books, including David Koehn's *Coil* and Michael Rothenberg's *Jujitsu with Others*. His work has been shown at the Diana Lowenstein Gallery, the Brattleboro Art Museum, and Luna Star Art Gallery.

Courtney Bush was born in Gulfport, Mississippi, where she still has a highly cool family. When she was eighteen, she moved to New York City for college, then to Paris, then to Buenos Aires, and then back to New York City, where she currently lives and studies. Her major was Romance languages, but she really only speaks English, if she's being totally honest. During her travels, she had the privilege of encountering a very interesting water hose on a boat. Refer to photo for evidence. Her spirit animal is Selena Gomez. She deeply loves hummus and making poems.





Meagan Cass, when not working as an assistant professor of creative writing at the University of Illinois Springfield, is thrift store shopping, or cooking something with tons of garlic, or writing about weird pastimes in the suburbs of New York City, where she is from. Her stories have appeared or are forthcoming in *Hayden's Ferry Review*, *The Pinch*, *Grist*, and others. Contact her at mcass3@gmail.com.

George Dila was born and raised in Detroit, when that city was thriving and respectable. Years later, from the comfort of his and his One True Love's Upper West Side Manhattan walkup, he watched on TV as Motown burned. Moved west. Learned to ski in the Colorado Rockies, a couple of hours from his and his OTL's house in a northwest Denver neighborhood. After fourteen years living a mile high, moved back to the Rust Belt. Helped raise two kids to functional adulthood in the northern suburbs of his old hometown, Detroit. Now, with his OTL, enjoying the Michigan good life in Ludington, a small town on a big lake. Spent a lifetime writing ads, but also worked in his youth as a golf caddy and supermarket cashier before scanners, and later as a New York City waiter and casino blackjack dealer. (But never, his parents were always proud to point out, as a bowling alley pinsetter.) George's prose has appeared in various lit mags, journals, newspapers, and magazines. His short story collection, *Nothing More to Tell*, was published by Mayapple Press (2011).



Sean Thomas Dougherty wrote his first real poems on the back of inventory control cards at the warehouse he worked at and drove a forklift in Derry, New Hampshire, in the late 80s. He fell in love with writing because he could never figure out, nor still can't, how marks on a piece of paper, written by a complete stranger, can move us so greatly—like speech from a loved one—that it saves our

lives. He is the author of twelve books, including the forthcoming *All I Ask for is Longing: Poems 1994-2014*, to be published by BOA Editions. Long underemployed and often unemployed, he survives in Erie, Pennsylvania, works part-time at Gold Crown Billiards, shoots in the BCA league, and teaches creative writing part-time when he can get it, most recently at Cleveland State University.

Melanie Graham knew she was psychic the day in sixth grade, mad at her teenaged brother, she mumbled under her breath, "Fine, leave me behind. You're going to wreck your car." When he returned hours later, the front of his black 1979 Camaro crumpled and dotted with bridge concrete, she sneered in the snotty way of eleven-year-old girls who enjoy being right most of the time. Other psychic events include being able to recite the locker combinations of total strangers in high school, knowing the exact moment her ex-boyfriend committed suicide three states away, and usually being able to predict who will win in the NFL. (She does not have a bookie, nor does she want one.) One of the things she cannot predict, much to her chagrin, is who will or will not publish her poems.





Greg S. Johnson grew up in suburban Chicago and earned a Bachelor of Journalism from the University of Missouri. After spending one too many years inside the Beltway as a researcher for Time-Life Books in Alexandria, Virginia, he packed his bags and headed to Asia. As an English teacher in the 1990s, he traveled extensively, living on thin mattresses, rice beer, and ginseng supplements in South Korea, Thailand, China, and Malaysia. He currently lives in Chicago. “Kasia” is his first published fiction.

Winnie Khaw is an ambitiously petite and plump young person of Chinese descent who becomes sadly older every year—a misfortune she malevolently shares with everyone else in the world except Halle Berry. Winnie indulges herself in scribbling fiction and poetry and mixing both, to admittedly bewildering but possibly amusing results. An obsessive reader, she indulges in an amateur student’s study of Western European and East Asian history and literature. Having presented at the Honors Program/Sigma Tau Delta regional and national conferences on her creative work, she hopes her writing is not wholly without merit. Either that, or the judging committees were in an odd mood. Very recently, Winnie has begun to look at publication outside academics and has succeeded in having short stories featured in *The Daily Satire* anthology, the Kung Fu Action Theatre audio podcast, and elsewhere. She aspires soon to be a successful published author and perhaps incidentally to change the world. For now she would be content with financial independence.



Bo McMillan was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee, but now lives on the west side of London where he watches his favorite soccer team, Chelsea, play every week. At least that’s what he wishes. In reality, he lives in Richmond, Kentucky, which is still pretty great even if it’s not London. Bo is a graduate of Eastern Kentucky University with an MFA in creative writing. His favorite part of grammar is the Oxford comma, despite what the naysayers think. His hobbies include reading, photography, spending too much time watching sports, and wandering the earth. His life dream is to one day own an alpaca farm in New Zealand.

Shira Richman recently ran into the steel stem of a street sign while peering into the windows of a chandelier bedecked room. As a clumsy person who is an inferior prizefighter, she is happy to call *Palooka* home. Her other homes have been or will be the *Los Angeles Review*, *PANK*, *Third Coast*, *Knockout*, and *Willow Springs*, among others. She currently runs into signs in Nuremberg, Germany and teaches creative writing at gymnasiums throughout Bavaria.





Andrew Robertson is from, and currently lives in, Louisville, Kentucky, and earned his BA from the University of Louisville. His pen and ink drawings have been shown in varying venues, from Louisville's Regalo Gallery to the city's annual art, wine, and chocolate show at the Sweet Tooth Cafe. Due to his Danish heritage, nineteenth century literature and Norse mythology have been the main inspirations for his work. He aspires to produce illustrations for both children's books and novels. You can catch him at robertsoniv@aol.com.

Erin Elizabeth Smith is the author of *The Fear of Being Found* (Three Candles Press, 2008) and *The Naming of Strays* (Gold Wake Press, 2011). Her poems have appeared in numerous journals, including *Mid-American Review*, *32 Poems*, *New Delta Review*, *Water~Stone Review*, *Cimarron Review*, and *Crab Orchard Review*. She teaches creative writing and literature at the University of Tennessee and serves as the managing editor of *Stirring: A Literary Collection* and the *Best of the Net* anthology.



Regina Valluzzi in her own words: I often ask myself whether I'm a physical scientist who also paints, or a painter who has studied a bit too much stat mech and field theory (as painters' physics needs go). Then I see something shiny and the question evaporates. I've developed entire research programs on the basis of making things shiny and, "please can we find a reason to turn on the really big laser?" In the process, I've become good at hiding my nefarious motives—for example, blowing holes in the wall—behind lovely sounding, high-minded ideas. I've recently decided enough is enough. In all honestly, I paint the way I do because I'm a science nerd. All of my paintings are somehow about physics. Even the flowers. There, I said it. Whew. If a painting is in an abstract style that depicts a phenomenon that can't be seen, only measured, abstracted, and visualized, then is it still "abstract"?

Michelle Valois in her own words: My six-year-old twins just joined tee-ball. We practice in the backyard. They use my old bat that is too heavy for their small arms, but they do not seem to mind and we have fun. My life has been about playing with the wrong equipment: skates so big my ankles wobble, tennis rackets missing strings. I don't mean to impose my childhood deprivation on my sons, but there is a certain scrappiness and resourcefulness that is nurtured when you have to improvise the tools of your life. Maybe I want to pass this skill along to my boys, or maybe I just haven't made it to the department store to get them the right size bat. Most of my life, I have read far too much into what I do or fail to do. Maybe that is why I am a writer. Maybe my fascination with a too-big baseball bat explains why almost everything I see, I see through the lens of one raised working class. Or maybe not.





Dan Wolff grew up in the 'burbs of Cincinnati, Ohio. He made his first five-page comic book at the age of four, though two pages were blank. With his first success behind him, he made his way to college where he studied how to use all of his pages to better effect. Now, he is a professional freelance artist, employing his illustration and narrative skills to tell his own stories and the stories of others. He currently lives in Austin, Texas, and leaves less pages blank.

Anthony Zephier in his own words: I am twenty five years old. I help drug addicts in California and I try to help myself. I believe in God. I'm in love with a girl on the Plains. I write because I want to be closer to other people, and I write because it seems like the right thing to do. I make art because art is communication, and I want to get to know you.

