

Poetry section

Edited by **Victor Postnikov**

Victor is a poet, essayist and translator whose home is in Kyiv, Ukraine.

Life far exceeds humans. For millennia, ecopoets have understood it as a far greater enterprise. In their poetry, we can hear the voices of those who came before us and those who live alongside us. Now, however, they face extinction and die in silence, deafened by the roar of civilization. The time has come to renew the old understanding that all life, including humanity, speaks a common language. Thus, the mission of ecocentric poetry, or ecopoetry, is to help us empathize with non-human entities, be they a whale, a tree or a mountain. For we are all kin. Through metaphor and imagery, it speaks directly to our hearts and genes. We begin to realize that we have evolved together and share a common fate.

CONTEMPORARY

Discovery

Christina Hennemann

*of the week: Moss Mite Mothers
Have Perfected Procreation!
Baby clones from egg*

*to larva, the quick six-legged
nymph, shedding exoskeleton,
growing another pair*

*of legs — mirror
image of their mothers. Sexless single-
sex society, like Gilman's Herland,*

*female utopia. Copy and paste,
jumping genes, success story
of more than 20 million years,*

*the news article jubilates. The story
is inescapable today. In a podcast,
the host jokes with his female*

counterpart about shrinking

*birth rates; offers his sperm to childless
women as commodity.*

CONTEMPORARY

Old Road to Asheville

Danny P Barbare

*Deep in the valley
is where I find my peace
where mountain laurel grows
along a winding road
of sun-split trees
and an old bridge of stone.*

CONTEMPORARY

The Greenness

Danny P Barbare

*Feeling
the
first
sun*

*is
the
beginning
of
the
greenness
in
the
grass
and
trees*

*it
is
the
happiness,
the
unfurling
of
the
new*

as
if
a
dream
has
just
taken
root.

CONTEMPORARY

Rights of the Earth (from “Cronache dall’Antropocene”)
Gabriele Micozzi

*At 1.5°C, the coral bleaches white—
a skeleton reef, a cathedral of silence.
Forty percent of insects vanish
in a liturgy no one wrote down.
The Amazon exhales grief:
1.1 billion tons of carbon, net emitter now.
Lung turned wound.
One species every ten minutes.
Not statistics.
Presence. Name. Gone.
We carved rights into stone
for centuries of human crimes—
but the Earth holds no passport,
stands in no court,
casts no vote.
Who speaks for the world that made us?*

CONTEMPORARY

Springwatch
Peter Sarkies

*An early March day
earth warm as red,
but sky squirrel grey, sunless.
Under the peeling birches
an assault musters:
the marching sticks,
all lurid yellow and green,
are trumpeting.
They are just the vanguard.
Beneath them*

*a dormant army, bulbous,
waits to spring up.
Next year they might breach
February.*

CONTEMPORARY

Knowledge

Peter Sarkies

*You think I'm stupid, that I don't know
where I'm going. It's true, my intellect is
no match for yours; Algebra and alchemy
glance off my brown eyes,
like flies from my smooth hide.*

That doesn't mean I don't know.

*Some things I know better than you:
which blades of grass are good to eat;
and what the air smells like just before rain;
and the sweet smell of the earth afterwards
when the grass tingles my tongue.*

*Yes, some things I know without being told.
I know where you took my two- not precisely,
but close enough.
And I know I'm headed there now
because my glands are drying out.*

*A mercy, you say; true, my udders ache.
Still, I am not done
with grass, with rain;
with those brief minutes
when life churned me
and the fence faded.*

CONTEMPORARY

Straits

Michael Sandler

*Despite the world's plight, I remain cooped
in my home office, space for a small desk
between a wall of books (fiction, nature)
and a pier table (platform for the modem).*

*An immense window to a browning view
is on my left as I type this—
the window's actually a sliding door
locked with two bolts I rarely open,
it reflects an interior door opposite
that I pass through when escaping*

*to another room. Don't scold. From these confines
at least I add little to the world's ills.
If you stood at the window (door), you'd see
a few blades of new grass among the brown.
A wren appeared a couple of days ago;
there're fewer this year. The insects they eat
diminishing too. If I went out, would it help,
hurt, or should I not think about it? The gate
so strait, I'd scrape myself passing through it
and might not reach the wren's faraway call.*

*Even if I made it out, I'd navigate blind
with faulty charts among bleached-out reefs.
Outside the window, you may notice
a sole camellia, leaves thick, buds taut with promise—
a hope to believe in for those not past hope.
Not much hope stirs me, a groundhog in retreat
from a looming shadow. Can you help
my helplessness or at least your own, tell me
there's a path through this landscape.
Tell it to me straight.*

CONTEMPORARY

Monsoons

Tushar Sen

*Monsoons enter the stage with rumble of
Thunder, like great sheets of rippling tin, and
Summers exit, quietly after a
Stewed display of blemishing incandescence.
Clouds that were left to soak in the oceans
For months, are hung to dry on the lightning
Fractured sky, like gray coloured quilts with
Silver braids, along with gigantic
Seven coloured arced rebozos. Water
That drips forms large misty silken scarfs, blowing
Incessantly over vast expanses.
The drizzle hissing in the trees sounds like*

*Leaves sizzling; sans steam, sans heat, sans fire.
 Rains dancing on my parapet sound like
 Pearls ricocheting off a marble floor,
 Each ripple fighting for its territory.
 Raindrops write and erase messages as
 They sinuously slide on my window panes,
 Those sparkling drops hanging on electric wires,
 In pursuit of each other, they embrace
 Lovingly, and become ONE, and gravitate
 As a single blob; those wires are long gone, and
 So are the romancing drops. Forlorn waters
 Stream through these narrow lanes, looking for paper
 Boats, made by the gammer who lives no more.*

Note from the poet: Rebozos are long flat scarfs, worn by women covering the shoulders and head; in the poem it refers to a rainbow. Gammer refers to an old countrywoman.

CONTEMPORARY

The swan song of the planet

Anushka

*There
 is a party
 in a yacht—fiberglass—
 coveted by paper straw users
 eating, drinking atm cards.
 The mother is mourned
 with polyester flowers
 that poke at
 her dead arms
 and choke
 her dead
 children.*

CONTEMPORARY

Duck River

Angie Kinman

*I wonder if Great Egret
 and Red-Winged Blackbird
 discuss the drought
 and draining of the river?*

*Or if Turtle lifts his head above
the surface and nods in agreement?
Monarch must chime in as she flits
from crimson clover to clover!*

*Perhaps it is enough I think,
to be a pastoral scene—
a river iced with yellow water lilies,
butterweed blooming on its banks,
and a layer of tufted vetch of purple hues.*

*Perhaps it is enough I pray,
to protect the river from peril.
Stop the landfill owners and developers—
save them from themselves.*

CONTEMPORARY

The whales' way

John Leonard

*'What is a whale to me?' you ask,
As though the whales' way: the wide ocean,
The salt wind, sun-glare, wave-spume,
The brute force—headland-hewing, strait-breaching—
That stirs whale-journeying, whale song,
Their lives, is not also the force that drives
Our life and song—as though the whales' way
Is not the way of human kind too.*

CONTEMPORARY

Magnolia

Philip Villamor

*Even without its iconic creamy white flower
the tree
in front of a simple small house
across the street from an industrial park
in Westminster California
is magnificent*

*Its massive trunk
becomes three large trunks
It divides after only a foot and a half
and captures my imagination*

*I could climb up in it and take a nap
there in the space where it divides
The curve of the space inside makes me sure
that is what it has been used for*

*I imagine the inhabitants of the house
being so proud to have such a tree
I wonder if they have lived there longer than intended
unable to part with it*

*Today
the middle of January in southern California
the large leathery glossy green leaves
with their rusty brown undersides
are enchanting enough*

*I extend my walk
my break from work
some ten minutes
to fully appreciate the beauty*

*I live two minutes from the beach but here
eight miles from the ocean
an undesirable area by comparison
cracked sidewalks older homes and industrial creepage
I will linger longer than I do at the shores*

In the summer months the flowers will bloom

*If I lived in this house
I would find it hard to leave
on those days*

*Only twenty to thirty feet high
but so full
so robust
because of... in spite of*

Magnificent Magnolia

About the poets

Christina Henneman is the author of the poetry collection *Birthmark* (Shearsman, 2025) and three poetry pamphlets. Her awards include the Cerasus Poetry Prize, the Luain Press Poetry Prize, an Agility Award from Arts

Council Ireland, a Mayo Artist Bursary, a Diana Woods Memorial Award in Creative Nonfiction, and the shared Ireland Freedom to Write Award supported by the John Hewitt Society and Irish PEN. Her work has appeared in *Poetry Ireland*, *Magma*, *Poetry Wales*, *The Irish Independent*, *Four Way Review*, and elsewhere.

Danny P Barbare resides in the US. His poetry has been published widely, most recently in *California Quarterly*, *Birmingham Arts Journal* and *Cardinal Sins*.

Gabriele Micozzi is an Italian poet and essayist whose work explores the fault lines between contemporary economic systems and the living world. His ecological poetry manuscript *Cronache dall'Antropocene* and his climate-fiction novel *Luminante* engage with the tradition of deep ecology and the responsibility of bearing witness to systemic ecological loss.

Peter Sarkies is a Biochemist at the University of Oxford in the UK, where I run a research group and teach undergraduates. I live in Oxford with my partner and a ragdoll cat. I have never published poems before and this is my first submission.

Michael Sandler is the author of a poetry collection, *The Lamps of History* (FutureCycle Press 2021), which Kirkus Reviews praised as “a complex, electric work of erudite poems.” Michael lives near Seattle.

Tushar Sen is a finance professional who also engages in sustained creative and scholarly writing. He is the author of *Pandora's Box*, a collection of short stories. His poetry has appeared in *Lekh* and *Indian Review*.

Anushka is a twenty-three-year-old from India who has always been romanticising the world with her pen. Her work has been published by Goya in February 2026 and is forthcoming in *Steam Ticket: A Third Coast Review* (vol 29).

Angie Kinman is a writer and retired teacher living in Nashville, Tennessee. Writing poetry about the natural world has become a spiritual practice since having a daughter, who had special needs, pass away on 2 March 2023.

John Leonard is an Australian poet with five poetry collections published. His poetry has been widely published, in Australia, the UK and the US, and on the Internet, and some of his poems have been translated into various languages and published, most recently *Frisian*. His novel *Shakespeare in Virginia* was published in 2024 in London.

Philip Villamor is an Administrator of Adult Education for a school district in Huntington Beach, California. He has had essays published in *Philosophy Now* and *Political Animal Magazine*. He lives in Huntington Beach with his wife, Marisa, and two kids, Celeste and Luke.