Interdependence
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Compiled by Sarah Groeneveld and Katie Rea
Drawings by Katie Rea
Peace Wall
By Tim Bagdanov

*Hail Mary*—where a passing bus swirls gutter leaves to air; and where shards of brick and glass are spread over gravel like unanswered prayers. Here, one avoids windows by night and herds kids to bed through the bleating of sirens.

*Full of Grace*—over there is a park where no children play, spine of cement and barbed wire down the center. Here, rosary beads are never Innocuous: they scream and wriggle out prayers of their own. Here, it is never know when Peace will be shattered with a yell and the yellow stare of a tiger.
Two Poems: Short and Long
By Nathan Welty

Was it enough:
(for the daughter)

that the jaded cleric droned on?
that the sun shone, staining blanched arches green?
that we sat suspended while
your Father’s stopgapped windpipe,
slumped mound of flesh,
snowcapped head
reposed on your shoulder?

Crucifixus
(for the father)

We keep hearing about stories.
What was yours? You, who
expired without a sigh.
Visitor, tourist
who knew not the creedal cadence
but faltered at the full stop.
Petrified, dead, and carried
out in a light-blue felt blanket.

One single story means nothing.
No cataclysm was reserved for you.
But the silent exhalation of a soul oversounded
Love Thy Neighbor,
froze the seated spectators.
We tasted flesh, bitter blood.
Ode to Homework  
Lynne Martens

Homework thou art evil  
Curst are the hands  
Of such professors  
Who dare to assign

Homework thou art evil  
Odious is the stench  
That arises from my textbook  
And consumes my being

Homework thou art evil  
Death would be preferred  
Over such stranglings  
Of a paper unrevised

Homework thou art evil  
What did I doest to deserve  
These tortures of the mind?  
I hate thee with all my heart

Homework thou art evil  
I shall study no more

Me Hungry:  
Journal entry on the train from Wales to Stratford  
By Ashton Barrett

I want to eat my sandwich  
Sitting in front of me neatly sealed in a plastic bag.  
Every so often, when the train curves  
My sandwich slides a little to the left or to the right  
On the table.

I watch it closely, making sure it does not fall from the table,  
But I do not secure it because:  
If my hand touches that plastic zip-lock bag enclosing my sandwich, than  
My hand will open that bag, and if I open that bag,  
Than my hand will reach in and delicately remove that sandwich,  
And if my hand frees that sandwich from the bag, than  
My hand will raise that liberated sandwich to my mouth,  
And if my hand raises that sandwich to my mouth, than  
My teeth will burst forth from behind my lips  
And sink themself into that sandwich,  
And if that happens, than  
I’ll chew that delicious sandwich to bits,  
And swallow until nothing remains of my sandwich  
But the crumbs in the sandwich bag  
Lying on the table in front of me  
Slightly sliding to the right as the train rocks  
To and fro.
Reflection on Paula Meehan’s Poetry Reading  
By Beth Nersesian

Hearing Paula Meehan read her poetry was like hearing a melody put to a page of lyrics. The combination of her lilting voice, tapping foot, and rocking body movements brought a musical quality to poetry like I have never experienced before. What had previously been displaced words on a page suddenly had a home as the meter and rhythm of her reading lulled me into a realization that poetry is for anyone who can find enjoyment in the choosing of words and their presentation. Knowing the background of the poet and the references to which she alludes can be a very useful aid not necessarily in interpreting a profound meaning in the poetry, but in appreciating the reasons for why it was written, how it affects its readers, and how it carries on the tradition of regional poetry.

Meehan allowed a group of American students who don’t often hear stories orally become like little Irish children sitting at the feet of their granny, listening to tales that have been passed down through generations. Not only did we experience a little chunk of Irish heritage, but we heard intonation and sounds in the poetry that may not have been obvious in the text itself being read from the lips of the writer. The way the words flowed from Meehan’s mouth made me realize that her words didn’t just create poetry, but also songs, another longtime heritage of Ireland.

This experience was especially attractive as we study poetry in Ireland because we can better understand just how influential legends and folksongs are as a source of national identity. In a place where religious and political division has ruled for so many centuries, stories and songs that survive generations and cross unspoken boundaries are even more important as they form a shared heritage and create a place for people to communicate with each other.

Meehan’s description of two of her poems and the way in which she read them emphasized the deep ties she has to Ireland. She mentioned that “Home” was written in honor of Ireland’s folk music, but as she spoke into each word a pitch and rhythm she wasn’t just honoring Irish folk music, but clearly carrying out that tradition despite her claim that she wasn’t a musician. Her words had as much musical quality as a song when she read, “I am a blind woman finding her way home by a map of a tune./ When the song that is in me is the song I hear from the world/ I’ll be home.”

The speaker in the poem writes of how she hasn’t found home yet, but continually finds music in the world that touches a place deep inside of her and “though [her] lines are all wonky they spell [her] a map that makes sense.” The speaker in the poem isn’t sure where the song in her heart and the song of the world will intersect, but it sounds from this line as though maybe she, like Meehan, has found another means of making music through the lines of poetry.

Before hearing Paula Meehan comment on the poem “Folk Tale,” I would have understood that it plays with the idea of truth, but I wouldn’t have understood that old women are often considered the embodiment of truth in Irish legends. Meehan’s knowledge of Irish traditions and folklore repeatedly reside in her poetry so subtly that without any footnotes, many international readers would miss her references entirely, as I did when reading the poem. Hearing her reference some of what could be called the “Irishness” of her poetry included us, a group of thirty American students, into a special place of
understanding. We were no longer foreign outsiders, but more like the young children at the feet of their granny, learning from someone older and wiser in the ways of Irish poetry.

Paula Meehan offered us a special opportunity to hear poetry in a different way than I dare say all of us had ever heard it before. When asked whether she is a musician or not, she said that she had dabbled in music when she was a little girl, but had never gone anywhere with it; however, as she read she unknowingly took on the role of a musician and shared the musical and lyrical heritage of Ireland through her accent, intonation, and passion for her country.

Lights Flash Through My Window
By Shelby Pervorse

lights flash through my window
ten minutes after the shots resound
into the night
the sound ricochets off the dirty stucco
as a pong orb off the pixel
white paddle
there was a party, they said, with
people turned away, a sense of injustice
surrounds this affair
orange graffiti covers the forest green
in unintelligible squiggles recalling
preschool art
water runs with hate and fear
lapping against the all-seeing, unyielding
cement curb
Stripe Day
for Katie Klopman
By Melissa Johnson

Green stripes, blue stripes, black and white,
All the stripes here bring delight!
Can I borrow? Will you wear?
A plastic bag striped in her hair!
Black and purple socks pulled high–
You wear plain white Michael? Why?

Dragonfly
after Emily Dickinson
By Melissa Johnson

I sit and think upon the brink
of a lovely pond and clear.
And while I sit I start to think
this little creature over here,

has something he must to me say.
For just as I’m convinced I’ve seen
the last of him dart fast away,
hark! Speeds he back in glorious sheen!

He cocks his head and flits his wings
as if unsure what I may be–
Then dancing off, he makes air sing
and leaves me trapped by gravity!
At this point in your story, Jesus, it looks like its over. Your body is in a tomb. Your enemies have posted a guard outside, sealed the tomb to prevent a “second deception.” Pilate, though he tried to wash his hands and be done with the whole mess, is yet again implicated by the chief priests and Pharisees. Exasperated, he tries to wrap things up once and for all. Things don’t look bad, they look done, finished, complete.

But it’s not the end. Even Mark, though he never talks about your risen self, doesn’t end it with the grave; he has an angel speak of your resurrection and lets us dwell in that wonder. And yet Matthew, Mark, Luke and John all talk about the resurrection in just a chapter or two. Strange. It’s an important event, important enough for all four gospel writers to at least mention it. It says that the end is not the end; it reinvents the story of your own life by pointing it all to this miracle, this glorification of yourself.

So why no extended discussion? Why no parables or speechifying? Why is the resurrection, the story that shows that your death wasn’t the end, abruptly brought to a halt, given surprisingly short shrift by each gospel writer?

A partial answer: Because, suddenly, your time has turned into our time. Resurrection is the great extensor, the point at which your suffering and death reach out, break the seal on the tomb and appear to us, glorified. It’s the place where Today begins, where the story ceases to be about you alone, with a dozen men floating around on the sides, and starts to be about us, your Church, your body, your fullness and life instead of pain and narrow death.

And in the truth of this, we can only bow our knee and say thank you. We can only humble ourselves and share this amazing gospel with others. We can only pray “Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.”
The Magi
By Katherine Klopman and Christopher Dunham

Folding corners, making tears blue triangles, purple squares formless first, and then it comes, a dog, a massive cranium. Tell me would you pay a quid for turtle or a scrappy squid? And let’s be honest, would you want a wrinkled tiny elephant? Watch the table-top parade; the marching paper menagerie. Then Patty Stew, a strange allure, this Prospero in miniature, “My folded friends, release your cares, my precious triangles and squares.

Ella Bella Dunn-Dunham and the Quest for the Holy Snail
By Mackenzie Hoeckley

Ella Bella Dunn-Dunham loved the playground. She was the one who ruled it. But Ella Bella needed helpers. Those helpers were: Tracy, toddler of Treaclecourt; Tina, toddler of Taffyland; Ruby, Waddler of Woodenspoonsea, and Henrietta, toddler of Vainville.

One day Ella Bella Dunn-Dunham and her babies of the blue swingset got a message from the dog, whom everyone worshiped. “Ella Bella Dunn-Dunham, I want you to find the Holy Snail!”

So off they went. First they came upon a tree with quite a few people in it. “Hello up there!” called Ella Bella Dunn-Dunham, “We are Ella Bella Dun-Dunham and the babies of the Blue Swingset, and we have a message from Dog, we are on a quest for the Holy Snail.”

“Oh,” said a voice that had a strange accent to it, “We got one.”

“What? May we see it? Who are you?” “I am a Kid from Kiddieland, and no you may not see it you bips. Now go away!” So Ella Bella Dunn-Dunham and her babies of the Blue Swingset did go away, for they could not face the Kids, which even Dog himself was no match for.

They then climbed Plastic Rock Wall Peak, slid down the slide of eternal horrendous yellow color, and swung across the jungle of monkeybars on chain vines. Then they got to the Bridge of 20 Questions, which has now been changed to three for the sake of the author. There was an elderly looking baby next to it and she
stopped them. “You first!” she said to Tracy, toddler of treaclecourt, “what is your name?”

“Tracy, toddler of treaclecourt, baby of the Blue Swingset.”

“What is your favorite color?”
“Blue.”
“What is your quest?”
“I seek the Holy Snail.”
“All right, off you go.” So off went Tracy.
“I’m next!” said Henrietta.
“All right,” said the elderly looking baby. “What is your name?”

“Henrietta, toddler of Vainville, baby of the Blue Swingset.”

“Yes, yes, I know that part. Now, what is your quest?”
“I seek the Holy Snail.”
“What is your favorite color?”
“Pink, no purple, wait-ahhhh!” and she fell down into the scratchy sandpit of scraped knees.

“So,” the elderly looking baby said, “What is your name?”

“Ella Bella Dun-Dunham” she said.
“What is your quest?”
“I seek the Holy Snail.”
“What is the color of the dogs third claw?”
“On which foot?”
“How should I know? Aghhh!” and the elderly looking baby fell into the scratchy sandpit of scraped knees, and the rest bravely crossed the Bridge of 20 Questions, which has now been reduced to three for the sake of the author.

At the other side they found the Dog, the Holy Snail, and four dolls. “These dolls are now yours, Ella Bella Dun-Dunham and the remaining babies of the Blue Swingset, for finding the Holy Snail.” Then the dog ate the Holy Snail, and Ella Bella Dun-Dunham and the remaining babies of the Blue Swingset found themselves, and their dolls, sitting at the swings. Ella Bella Dun-Dunham and pushed her doll on the swing, Tracy toddler of Treaclecourt and Tina toddler of Taffyland were playing hair salon with their dolls, and Ruby, wadder of Woodenspoonsea was bashing the brains out of her doll with a wooden spoon, covering her doll with sand, and putting its head in her mouth. Then they all went home and fell asleep.

The End.
**Lap Tops**
*By Katie Rea*

Laps once seats for children, purring cats
Now house contrived white squares
Mechanic, Inorganic, Titanium White
These are static strange extensions for hands.
They of Veins, Thumbs and wrinkled skin
Are ace-bandaged by this hardness
While screen barriers lock Brown eyes.

Blue lights on human faces,
They become electric sea creatures
Reigning invisible, unfathomably deep
Whose mug-shots are nightmares of twisting and teeth.

They fall on steady stares
Bobby beacons in the dark room
Stares above Raindrop Keys
Their pointed spontaneity, deleting and inserting.

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**At Corrymeela**
*By Sarah Groeneveld*

There are roads that lead to nowhere
and destinations without roads.

This is a land where the sea
changes color with the weather
as it strokes the jutting cliffs of green
under a sky that grows larger at night
to contain the brightest stars.

Moving inland,
the grass changes color
as swiftly as the sea.

We come to a sleeping street,
home to burned out buildings
and patched up flats.
Glass grinds on the ground
beneath our tentative, alien feet.

Lilting voices sculpt images in our minds
of roads that lead to nowhere.
The voices move into the grey, for
if all is black and white,
we lose the color of the sea
and the grass
and the shades
of the sky
at night.
London without You
By Kellie Hicks

Day one:
Oyster Cards.
Circle Line.
Goodge Street.
I miss you.

Charing Cross.
Haagen Daas.
Trafalger Square.
I miss you.

Manet to Picasso.
Pizza Express.
St. Martin's In the Fields.
I miss you.

Leichester Square.
Ridgemont Hotel.
I miss you.

The Northern Line.
Tesco Express.
Pimms and Lemonade.
I miss you.

Day Two:

Neal's Yard.
Piccadilly Line.
Harrod's.

H & M.
Sainsbury's.
Haagen Daas.
I miss you.

Boots.
Covent Garden.
Sangria.
I miss you.

Big Ben.
London Tower.
Henry VI.
I miss you.

Day Three:

Chinese Steam Cake.
Pashminas.
Victoria Station.
I miss you.

Marks and Spenser Simply Food.
Wicked.
Baileys on the Rocks.
I miss you.

Okawari.
Tariyaki Tofu.
Green Tea.
I miss you.

England Semester, I miss you.
The Blister
By Shelby Pervorse

The life of a blister is a short one, measuring its existence in the growth of pink skin cells collecting beneath the liquid cushion, encased by a thin layer of irritated skin, rubbed raw by a foreign object testing the durability of the body’s largest organ, pushing the limits of comfortability to coax a wince or a moan, a sigh or a curse, a rub or an ouch, and finally forcing the test subject to gingerly make their way to a pharmacy to purchase over-priced plasters to shield the tender bubbles covering their skin all because they wanted to look nice for the symphony.

Shoo-Be Doo Wop Monastery of the Holy Cross
Reflection Essay
By Kellie Hicks

Walking to the Monastery of the Holy Cross could be a test of faith in itself. The woosh of the speeding cars down the long straightaway stands in stark contrast to the silence in the monastery’s circular sanctuary. The Benedictine monks in Rostrevor, Northern Ireland welcomed our group with open arms and prayers. I had the privilege of celebrating a couple vespers and a mass at the monastery during our stay. The contrast of being in a familiar tradition and being in a land of sectarian turmoil challenged my thoughts about the Eucharist and reconciliation.

I had already been to one vespers service before I realized that Benedictine monks were Catholic. I noticed that the monks had made the sign of the cross during vespers but after seeing Anglican priests do the same in Dublin I dismissed it as coincidence. I also noticed the tabernacle on the left wall of the sanctuary and the crucifix behind the altar but I still wrote it off. Even after our discussion with Brother Thierry I asked Shelby if I could take communion because I’m Catholic to which she replied, “I guess so.” I went into the celebration expecting a Catholic mass and when I heard the pipe of the organ I instantly felt at home.

I fell right into step with the liturgy and even though I couldn’t follow along on all the notes I still knew the English translation to the Latin words I was singing. Aside from one reading from the Old and New Testaments before the Gospel reading instead of the traditional two, mass was akin to my home parish in
California. I was blown away by the beauty of the mass and for the first time I felt like I could fully commit to the Catholic tradition and the thought of receiving the sacrament of Confirmation entered my mind.

However, I was instantly bombarded by the sound of a student reciting liturgy. This particular student knew the liturgy because she was raised in the tradition. I immediately thought, “Why did you give up? Why did you have to leave our tradition?” I knew she didn’t leave the Catholic Church because she saw the hypocrisy and was “giving up” like I had done nearly 6 years ago but the thought was there.

While I continued to recite liturgy on my knees during the blessing of the Eucharist I felt like an “insider” who knew all the secret passwords and handshakes. I knew everything that was happening, I knew the significance of it, and I was able to participate instead of just watch; again, I felt at home.

However, this feeling would quickly fade as I rose to queue to receive Communion. I was the only one standing in my pew. I walked by four rows of my peers, people who I knew were devout Christians, and only I was granted the opportunity to receive communion. I felt awkward, singled out. I was an outsider in my own community. I sensed thirty pairs of eyes on the back of my head as the host touched my tongue, and again when the wine slid down my throat. As I walked back to my seat I felt like I received it for all of us, but at the same time I felt unworthy to be the link of two communities. As the only one kneeling in my pew I fully understood what Brother Thierry meant when he said, “We, Catholics, have to show Protestants that we can worship in a way other than the Eucharist…We have to meet them on a higher level. We have to meet them in prayer.” I attended another Vespers service that night and I was able to enter into complete fellowship with my Protestant friend sitting at my side and my Catholic brothers at the altar. That celebration was the opposite of my emotional experience that morning, and the difference was the absence of the sacrament of Communion.

In Northern Ireland everything marks what side you’re on: what sports you like, your given name, whether you say “Derry” or “Londonderry,” and especially what church you go to. If men and women don’t attend the university then they may never intermingle with the other community. So if Catholics and Protestants worship together in the same space it’s a rare opportunity for reconciliation. However, the Eucharist is exclusive. Catholics believe they are the one true Church and one must have completed the sacrament of First Communion in a Catholic parish to receive the Eucharist. By doctrinally excluding Protestants they are inadvertently preventing both communities from feasting together.

This was the first time that I had seen the Eucharist as divisive. Before this experience I couldn’t imagine that sharing of one body could create divisions in the body of Christ. In the name of reconciliation the monks in Rostrevor have had to challenge their own community to reach out to each other in prayer. In order to be one body as we are called to be, we need to focus not on what can tear us apart but what holds us together. We need to meet each other half way which means realizing that the walls we build don’t just keep others out but they also put us in a box, and it means that we give each other grace when we are unable to see the walls that we have built.
Underground
By Tim Bagdanov

Brown dark brown
suit hanging over
the sharps of shoulders.
Hands clasped across thighs—
thumb kneading
knuckle. Skin ripple,
pinch vein, taut
stretch—like a vacuum
coughing up a rug.

Blackfriars

The cabin sucks in
desperate, then exhales.
A straightening suit
blown to fumes.

Love Song for the Sand
By Lynne Martens

Diving through the crispy air, the majestic pelican plunges
nearly into the blue icy depths, but in an instant turns up and
skims upon the water. Droplets jump from wing to ocean,
ocean to wing giving life as to breath. The waves
thunder ashore pounding its conquering claim
on the sand as foam rushes forward. Soft whispers
exude from the froth
oh how I love thee
and with gentle kisses race back to the sea.
Silence.
For a moment as the waters roar again
and the foam returns to kiss my feet.

Silence.

For a moment as the waters roar again
and the foam returns to kiss my feet.
oh how I love thee
Water swirls about then sinks into earth
made of tiny grains often kicked up and mixed
throughout by impressions of thousands of feet.
Thousands who have gone before and who come after.
Some gentle,
some forceful,
some flat,
some branded,
and some made from four feet of four toes.
The wind whistles over the temporary
imprints transporting the voices of angels speaking,
laughing, whispering wisdom of the ages, then speeds
on towards the sky where it merrily greets the pelican
soaring up and over the expanse. Into the setting sun
his distance increases ‘til that foam-kissed sand becomes
a mere memory.
Christ Beyond
In response to the question of why we should travel abroad
By Andrew Massena

I can remember the day the 2006 Westmont College England Semester Group first met together. It was in April, four months before our departure for the United Kingdom, where we would be spending the entire semester learning English in its birthplace. The first thing our professor had us do when we were all gathered was read a poem: Gerard Manley Hopkins’ “34th.” As we recited each phrase aloud, I found one attach itself to me, sewing itself to the fibers of my mind—“For Christ plays in ten thousand places”—Meister Eckhart’s sermon, then Hopkins’, and now mine.

Upon reading these words, suddenly the world didn’t seem as disjointed, complicated, and foreign as I believed it to be. Suddenly, here was Christ. And he was everywhere, working ceaselessly to redeem: his omnipotence putting our jigsaws together; his omniscience teaching us simplicity; and his omnipresence reminding us of his nearness—that he who is everywhere brings everything together, causing all things to become his story, a salvation history, an invitation to us to make his story our own, and our story each others’—into a chronicle, filled with plots and subplots, lightness and darkness, and lists endless with characters that truly matter.

It is an invitation that if I don’t accept, will lead me to found towers that stretch heavenward and cling to what I know: my story—nothing more. And thus, I will never know what goes beyond my border: of the sickle that harvested its people across the steppes, of the Great Monkey King who moved mountains to save his friends. I will only know one way to see; I will only see Christ in one way.

When I watch the saints go marching in, two by two, right to left, onward and forward, I realize their rhythms are different—sometimes almost wholly different. Do some know the Drummer better than the others? Have some practiced harder than anyone else? Or does the Drummer make beats that honor each saint’s song? I’d like to think all three, but with a little toward the third. I don’t think Christ is so limited that he can only stand one song, or hear only one at a time. I think he conducts his greatest symphony when all songs play together as one, and in coming to know the different parts, we come to appreciate the symphony as much as we possibly can.

Think for a moment about this. There are over ten million visible colors in the universe. Imagine if Michelangelo had but one to choose from to paint the Sistine Chapel. There are over five hundred thousand words in the English language. Imagine if Charles Dickens had but one to choose from to write David Copperfield. There are two hundred and forty-three countries in the world, all with their own distinct cultures and subcultures. Imagine doing theology, or even soteriology, ecclesiology, anthropology, any-ology and have but one color to choose from, one word to use, one cultural paradigm to see through.

In Via Dolorosa, there is more than one road that leads to Golgotha. In scaling a mountain, there is more than one path that climbs to the top. Christ is on all shores. And so, in coming to faraway places, we come to know his chronicle with all its different plots and characters, and in reading, we come to know the Author who binds all these intricacies together. And there is
something that happens when we search in ten thousand places for Christ. We begin to see him—in everything: each kingfisher, each dragonfly, each roundy well, each hung bell, each gentle wind that blows, each face, each mind—each heart. And in beginning to see Christ in all things, we begin to love all things as we would love Christ. The world begins to look like Kingdom come. Christus begins to makes sense when attached to Victor. This is not to say all ways are right. This is not to say my way is wrong. This is Christ—playing in ten thousand places.

**Basket Weaver**  
*By Kristin George*

See how She deftly weaves-
submerges inflexible fibers
into the deep, deep, sea.
Flooding inexperienced membrane,
She transforms staunch, starch, stalks
To supple, supine, susceptible.

Artfully she constructs
the ancient pattern that has held
the test of time and torrent.
Conscious of a sacred complexity,
yet ignorant of origin and rationale;
She must decide which are to be wrought.

As nature becomes vassal
fashioned for servitude,
a dissenting reed is discovered:
questions the watertight pattern
unchecked thus far by compensation,
forcing the weaver to acknowledge neglect.

Patiently She begins
the painstaking process
of separation
and severance.
Reeds once resilient
turn tender and vulnerable:
fibers are frayed,
design is splintered-
dismemberment is now complete.
Yet see how She starts to weave once more:
wary of prior mistakes, She adapts;
Perfecting the intricate art
of knitting tender materials
to form impermeable vessel, She creates.

Dividing what is intimately wrought,
destroys piece by fragile piece;
So let us weave delicately and slow,
that these feeble fibers may form
a structure more formidable
than they alone, were before.