



Mission Statement

Where can you share your work with lecturers in the English department, MFA graduates, and current MFA students?

Here .

This is a Bi-monthly publication just for us!

Read the submission guidelines on the back of this, our flagship issue.

Who

Neli Moody and Linda Lappin, editors

Cover poems

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## Even Beasts Are Beautiful Things

Nature is dazzling. Whether the animals be raucous scarlet macaws or deadly tangerine-hued tree frogs, armored crocodiles or massive tigers with dagger black stripes, we are surrounded by strikingly beautiful creatures. Rare. Elegant. Miraculous. Deadly. In the wild, animals are breathtaking in their beauty and powerful in ways that remind us of how small we are. They can remind us that we are stewards, entrusted with the care of the earth and

the animals on it. They can remind us that we are human.



Read Wendell Berry's poem, "The Peace of Wild Things" at [poets.org](http://poets.org) or at <http://vimeo.com/74755473>

### Rhinoceros

Horns, implacably potent, between my tired and clouded eyes, centuries  
of obscure enemies, formless threats, nameless perils have troubled

me like insects. I don't know why I am so easily incensed. Uncertain  
of my friends, save the bird on my back, *askari wa kifaru*, tick eater,

wound keeper, they whisper to me that I have no foes, but in a world  
inhabited by the shapeless—ghosts of lions, shadows of baboons,

the only comfort lies in the reverberation of my hooves as I,  
half-blind, charge the real or imagined danger, the weight

of my unknowing a force of destruction. This is my wish,  
that I, stumbling past the phantoms of my diminished kind,  
find, in my solitary thunder,

beneath the snow-crowned peaks of Nepal and India,  
buried in the drunken growth of the Congo,  
or in the transitory and shimmering absolution of a Tanzanian waterhole,  
something like second sight.

Neli Moody

## Chicken Killers

We watched the chicken  
helpless hands in fists.  
The gallbladder or some bile  
filled organ  
gorged with green ink, my  
brother brushed a finger  
cool, he said like wet  
cement like the rancher's  
son touching tongue to tongue  
with the severed chicken head.

Take this Jaime says.  
I disconnect wing  
from body. I crack

body from skin, skinless  
he smiles.  
No plucking the chicken body  
birthed from goldenrod fat  
sand skin, rust-red feathers.

*Rachelle Linda Escamilla*



## A little Basho for our winter days

A cuckoo cries,  
and through a thicket of bamboo  
the late moon shines

or one touched by monkey cries  
how is it when a child's abandoned  
in autumn winds

borrowing sleep  
from the scarecrow's sleeves  
midnight frost



## Poet's notes

I find human interactions fractious and often heartbreaking, but just about any creature, even an ant who finds his way up a 3 story building across a knobby carpet, up a table leg, and across my desk—where I feel him. Feel his delicate ant-ness and love my place in his life. Well, anyway we had a moment. As long to him, as I suppose my life will be for me—and with just as much awareness of my surroundings.



## *Last minute of the ant's life*

It was so hot I felt him;  
making his way through the yellow forest  
of my blonde forearm.  
Too hot to be very creative, I paused;  
enjoying the delicate tickle, and  
the light footed tapping between my fingers.  
Then the sensation stopped.

I opened my eyes —where was he?  
Was he somewhere on this page?  
And then a semicolon zigzagged across this the page.  
Alert to some purpose...

Like this pen  
He darts about on the blue lined page  
And pauses .  
A breeze blows  
And the page turns

Linda Lappin



## In Memoriam

Influences—we lost two wonderful spirits, whose voices, lives and legacies we cherish.

**Richie Havens,**

From RollingStone magazine

Richie Havens, who brought an earthy soulfulness to the folk scene of the Sixties and was the first act to hit the stage at Woodstock, died of a heart attack on Monday, April 22. He was 72 and was living in Jersey City, New Jersey. Last month, Havens announced he would no longer be touring due to health issues.



Michael Putland/Getty



Photo by John McCally

And Pete **Seeger**

From the Huffington Post:

When Pete Seeger died at the age of 94 last week, he left three extraordinary legacies: all of them world-class. One was of music -- building audiences for folk music and making his own remarkable contributions to it. A second was of environmental activism -- for which the cleaned-up Hudson River and the *Clearwater*, which still sails as its guardian, are stunning examples. The third was of community, which he built through his music and inspired to focus on such crucial causes as civil rights, human rights, social justice and environmental protection.



[time-peace-now.blogspot.com](http://time-peace-now.blogspot.com)

On “Rhinoceros” by Neli Moody

The first poem I ever presented in a poetry workshop was a poem about rhinos. That was at the University of Cincinnati and I suppose there was something about these massive half-blind creatures that resonated with me. I had watched the unrest of the 60's on a black and white set and I thought about the young people who had left their comfortable homes to get on the Freedom buses. There, they faced a rage they could never have imagined. I thought of the rage one carries after centuries of enslavement and oppression and I thought of the sheer strength it takes to confront violence with non-violence believing you will triumph. That is second sight.

## Synonym



## Events and Readings and Other News

### CLA-

Feb. 5, 6 7:00 and 1:00 p.m. Cristina Garcia MLK 225-229

Feb. 19 7:00 p.m. D.A. Powell, MLK 225-229

March 4, 5 7:00 p.m. Misako Rocks, MLK 225-229

April 8, 7:00 p.m. Rabih Alameddine, MLK 225-229

April 23 7:00 p.m. Joy Harjo, MLK 2250229

[www.litart.org](http://www.litart.org)

**March 8** Celebration of the Muse. Neli Moody reading

[Bookshop Santa Cruz](#), 1520 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz .

**Poets@Play.** Edwin Markam House in History Park, 1650 Senter Road, San Jose, CA 95112. Free admission and parking.

[www.pcsj.org/calendar.html](http://www.pcsj.org/calendar.html). PCSJ had readings the third Thursday of every month at 1157 Minnesota Avenue.

Mosaic Open Mikes at Pomegranate Café, 221 East San Fernando

## Submission Guidelines

Before submitting your poem, please make sure you have read and adhered to the following guidelines where applicable:

1. Submit three to five of your best poems.
2. Poem must be 30 lines or less, including stanza breaks but not including the title, and lines may be no more than 60 characters across, including spaces.
3. One poem per page.
4. Be sure to proofread your poem for any grammatical errors.
5. Submit the poem in the format you intend. We cannot guess at formatting and we want to maintain the formatting.
6. Art, original and otherwise, is permitted, but you must have permission to use it.
7. The editors will make an effort to respond to your submissions in a timely manner.
8. Simultaneous submissions are allowed, and previously published material with acknowledgements will be accepted.
9. Send your poems to [synonymeditors@gmail.com](mailto:synonymeditors@gmail.com).  
Send poems as Word doc attachments.
10. We look for fresh imagery, evocative language and surprising perspectives.



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