

# **tinfoildresses**

## **2024**



Photograph by Adam Schmidt

## Poetry

## **John Burroughs**

## **Critical Condition**

In Portage, Indiana, a man drives off  
the Interstate, rolls and rolls, mangles  
his pickup, rests under an overpass,  
barely subsisting on December rainwater  
for six days until fishing scouts happen  
upon the wreckage and initiate a rescue  
while in Ohio I cup my hands, let them fill  
with rain to get me through till I see you.

## **A Superior Stimulant**

Drinking in the photos she sends  
I feel inadequacy in my solitary  
morning coffee and can't help  
returning to an image of her  
feet in the brisk Youghioghenny  
a warmer, more welcoming cup  
being held between her knees.

## **Bilateral Heart Moon Resolution**

To love or lunacy  
(it's not always easy  
to tell the difference)  
I pledge my being,  
to more open seeing  
and fuller experience.

***<https://linktr.ee/johnburroughs>***

**Rosa Jamali**

## **The Lighthouse**

Translated from original Persian into English by the Author

Lying on one side  
I was moving the oceans one by one with my feet  
It is the same flaming tropic that passes through my waist every few moments,  
The same blaze fire that's painting all the tropical zones on my body;  
All those Wild tribes,  
The Canary coasts,  
And the equator!

Where did you draw the Arctic ocean?  
A pile of my hair are dark palm trees  
My eyebrows are the command of the North Wind  
My hands are the sails of the Atlantic  
My eyes; the lighthouse  
My lips trenches of the seabed...



**Marissa Prada**

## OCCAM'S RAZOR

I am ready to see my body as  
beautiful  
again.

When I close my eyes  
I see my body one way  
the old way  
then the mirror mirrors a reality  
that's been swayed by the growth of lives inside me  
and time  
and stress  
and pain  
and injury  
and survival.

I am ready to see my body as  
beautiful  
again.

I brush my teeth  
my tongue mouths around my mouth  
as I remember there was a time  
it knew the breath of another,  
foreign tongue mixed with mine  
entwined like teenagers to mingle tingles  
down to my toes.  
I am ready to see my body as  
beautiful  
again.

I feel my skin  
soft and warm  
warn out by sunshine and smiles,  
skinned knees and night shifts,  
backyard landscaping and c-sections.  
    Ever growing older.

I am ready to see my body as

beautiful  
again.

I feel my breasts  
swollen only by sitting too long in zoom meetings  
forgotten ladies of longing  
to be needed these days...  
for the feeding of babies has waned  
and being seen for pleasure  
is all but extinct these days.

I am ready to see my body as  
beautiful  
again.

I've always loved my face  
facing days filled with fear  
tonic of tears from years of not being enough  
for anyone  
for anyone to see me again  
beneath this iron mask of motherhood  
to touch the woman beneath  
and not be turned to stone.

I am ready to see my body as  
beautiful  
again.

I am ready to open my legs and let it all breathe!  
Let it find a way to survive  
the aching nights of longing  
to feel sex once more,  
to feel alive once more,  
to belong to love once more.  
I am ready to see my body as  
beautiful  
again.

Because he tells me that I am beautiful.  
he sees me and says it is so.  
and so it must be  
because he would never lie to me...

and so if he sees the beauty within what's left of me  
then certainly

I can see my body as  
beautiful  
again  
too.

**Heather Ann Shepard**

If my tears were snow  
I would bury myself here  
Waiting for the white

თუ ჩემი ცრემლები თოვლი იყო  
აქ დავმარხავდი  
თეთრის მოლოდინში

tu chemi tsremlebi tovli iq'o  
ak davmarkhavdi  
tetrish molodinshi

Poem in English and Georgian interpretation  
by Heather Ann Shepard

Two bluejays nestled  
Among bare winter maple trees—  
Discovered portrait.

ორი ცისფერი ბუღობდა  
შიშველი ზამთრის ნეკერჩხლის ხეებს შორის -  
ნაპოვნია პორტრეტი.

ori tsisperi budobda  
shishveli zamtris nek'erchkhlis kheebshoris -  
nap'ovnia p'ort'ret'i.

Poem and Georgian interpretation by Heather Ann Shepard

**Steven B. Smith**



## **Rant and Roll**

Gimme that TV I.V.  
for vain in vein insane  
gimme booze, sex, gambling  
highline fashion  
low blows  
gimme local lobotomy  
drill my lobal monstrosities  
gimme gone  
gimme go  
gimme fast cars in red glow  
neon no ones run low  
jazz jumped slow  
gimme want and went and wan  
night in sight of sun  
anything to numb  
this shit world dumb  
to doom due profits sons  
in never pure  
ever slippin' strip stream whirl  
gimme never when  
back then  
Zen  
but get me gone  
I don't belong  
nor do  
you

## **The Sisyphus Effect**

I tried to tell her  
don't get up  
stay in bed  
it's a scam  
another reality trick  
they get you every time  
first you wake up  
then you sit up  
step out of bed  
and whammo  
they got you  
again  
they make you do stuff  
be things  
go places  
eat  
defecate  
take  
fake  
I told her  
tried to warn her  
but no  
she's up  
doing yoga  
making coffee  
petting the cat  
listening to Willie Nelson  
caught again in the web of want  
old debt new due  
one more early worm demanding bird

## **Leftover Lines**

Dog at wife's feet  
cat's on shelf  
I as usual am in the dark

Outside there  
inside here  
which is real?

Lying on back  
reaching for pills  
knowing doc said "No refills"

Sitting in dark  
black cat in lap  
reduced to glint and purr

~ ~ ~

Open road  
Closed mind  
Detour

~ ~ ~

Between the fire  
and the forest  
lies the flame

~ ~ ~

Frog on log  
part would  
part bog

## Translation

**Adam Schmidt**

## **The Hound and the Sparrow**

-- English --

There was once a sheepdog of no good masters, rather a sad single figure of one. This man crushed the wits of the dear hound by leaving him in a consistent state of starvation. As time went onwards, the heart of the hound grew to swell and burst with betrayal and sadness. Out of his emotions rose the choice to flee out into the suburban street. It was in this place that the hound encountered a sparrow.

To the hound he inquired: "brother hound, why do you appear so sad?"

To which the hound responded, "I am famished to the point of madness, and I have not a thing to allow my stomach peace."

"Why dear brother, if that is so, allow me to take you into the city. I wish to make you forget your sorrows of hunger and fill your desire for food."

And thus, they left the spot of their suburban proto-encounter for the long journey into the city. When they had arrived, they found themselves standing before a butcher's shop.

In this place, the sparrow addressed the hound, "wait at this spot, dear brother, I wish to peck you down a piece of meat from this butcher's hanging rack."

The sparrow perched himself upon the shop and looked around. When he did not spot anyone of danger, he picked, pulled, and dragged at a piece of meat which lay on the edge of the hanging rack. He did this until the meat began to slide off the rack. As it finally fell, the hound snagged it with great might and fled to a corner and devoured it with great satisfaction.

"Come, join me on the journey to another shop so that I may slide you down another piece of meat, hopefully then that will satisfy your long festering hunger," spoke the sparrow.

After the hound had feasted upon his second piece at the second spot, the sparrow inquired to the hound: "Brother hound, have you now no hunger and only the satisfaction of a full stomach?"

"When it comes to meat, I have satisfaction," he answered, "but I have not any bread to consume."

And so spoke the sparrow, “then that is something you will also have, simply accompany me on another quest.”

After this, they both traveled to another part of the city and came to a baker’s shop. Here the sparrow picked down some rolls. Even at this the hound was still not satisfied, so the two of them traveled to another baker’s shop. Here the sparrow brought him an entire loaf of bread.

After the bread was consumed, the sparrow asked, “brother hound, do you now possess the satisfaction of a full stomach?”

“Yes, now may we leave for the place whence we have come.”

As planned, the two of them left the electric atmosphere of the city and went out on the suburban street which protruded off into the far distance from the city. On this day, it happened to be quite warm weather.

When the two of them turned a corner, the hound spoke to the sparrow: “As a result of our long adventure, I have grown weary and tired, I would like to sleep.”

“Okay, I will perch myself upon a twig while you do that.” answered the sparrow.

And so, the hound fell asleep upon the suburban street. As the hound slept, a coachman came about driving a wagon with three horses. This coachman had two great barrels of wine in his wagon. As the sparrow watched the wagon grow ever closer, he noticed that the coachman did not have any perceived intention to swerve around the hound, which lay in the middle of the cart track.

“Do it not, coachman, or else I will make you poor!” Shouted the sparrow in his state of shock.

Despite the sparrow’s cry of disapproval, the coachman drove his horses forward. He responded after a moment with: “There is no way you could make me poor!” He then cracked his whip upon the backs of his horses and drove over the hound.

“You killed my dear brother hound with your wagon! This gratuitous deed shall cost you cart and horse!”

“Yeah, cart and horse,” spoke the coachman in his impertinence, “there is no way by which you could harm me!” He then continued on down the suburban street where this all had happened.

After a moment, the sparrow crept under the wagon cloth and began to pick at the bunghole of one of the barrels of wine. When a small lapse of time had passed, the



sparrow got the wine to begin pouring out like an ocean from its former home out onto the suburban street. Soon the coachman looked back upon his load, noticed something was amiss and went to investigate.

Upon noticing that one of his barrels of wine was empty, a shout escaped the depths of his lungs. "Oh how I am a poor man!"

"Not poor enough!" Shouted the sparrow. He then flew upon the head of one of the three horses and proceeded to pick its eyes out. As the coachman saw, he swung his hoe at the sparrow. In his wishes the hoe would have struck the sparrow, but instead missed as the sparrow flew into the heavens, as the hoe stuck the head of the horse cold and dead.

"Oh how I am a poor man!"

"Not poor enough!"

As the coachman took his two remaining horses and drove forward, the sparrow crept yet again below the wagon cloth and picked at the bunghole of the second barrel causing all the contents to spill out.

When the coachman noticed, a shout escaped the depths of his lungs. "Oh how I am a poor man!"

"Not poor enough!" spoke the sparrow. He then proceeded to fly upon the head of the second horse and picked its eyes out. The coachman swung his hoe at the sparrow, missing the sparrow as the sparrow flew into the heavens, and striking the horse dead.

"Oh how I am a poor man!"

"Not poor enough!" Spoke the sparrow as he flew upon the head of the third horse and picked its eyes out. In the coachman's rage, he swung his hoe again at the sparrow, only to be met with the same grim outcome.

"Oh how I am a poor man!"

"Not poor enough," answered the sparrow, "now I wish to make you poor in your home!" He then flew onwards.

The coachman left his wagon idle in the street and walked the remaining distance home full of anger and indignation.

"Oh what bad luck I have had," the coachman said to his wife, "all the wine has been drained and all three of the horses are dead."

“Oh my, what kind of evil bird has been let into our home. He has required all in the world to consume, but still seems not to be satisfied, not one bit. He has attacked our wheat supply and eaten it up.”

As the sparrow sat perched above the wheat supply, there came in the house thousands upon thousands of birds. Many sat themselves down upon the floor of the home and began to eat the wheat that was spread upon the ground. The sparrow sat amidst all of this chaos.

“Oh how I am a poor man!”

“Not poor enough!” answered the sparrow, “it will still cost you your life.” The sparrow then flew out of the home.

It was here the coachman lost all good that remained within him, went into the front room, sat himself in front of the oven and began to be evil and toxic.

The sparrow sat before the window and said, “coachman, it will still cost you your life.”

Here the coachman grabbed his hoe and threw it at the sparrow, instead of striking the sparrow, it shattered the panes of the window. The sparrow then hopped through the broken window and on top of the oven.

Here the sparrow said, “coachman, it will still cost you your life.”

In a blind moment of rage, the coachman struck the oven asunder. Immediately the sparrow flew to another place, to the mirror, to the bench, to the table, and finally to the wall. Even through all of this, the coachman could not get the sparrow. At last the sparrow was caught by a hand.

“Should I strike him dead?” asked the coachman’s wife.

“No, that would be too mild a punishment. It should be something much worse. I would like to eat him.” said the coachman.

The coachman then proceeded to eat him up in one bite. In the body of the coachman, the sparrow began to flutter his wings and began to fly upwards and out through the mouth and perched himself upon the mouth of the coachman.

“Coachman, it will still cost you your life,” said the sparrow.

The coachman then reached his hand towards the hoe and said to his wife: “Strike this bird dead by way of mouth.”

She did as requested, but the swing missed the bird and instead struck the coachman dead. The sparrow then flew out and away from the home.

-- Deutsch --

Ein Schäferhund hatte keinen guten Herrn, sondern einen, der ihn Hunger leiden ließ. Wie er's nicht länger bei ihm aushalten konnte, ging er ganz traurig fort. Auf der Straße begegnete ihm ein Sperling, der sprach: "Bruder Hund, warum bist du so traurig?" Antwortete der Hund: "Ich bin hungrig und habe nichts zu fressen." Da sprach der Sperling: "Lieber Bruder, komm mit in die Stadt, so will ich dich satt machen." Also gingen sie zusammen in die Stadt, und als sie vor einen Fleischerladen kamen, sprach der Sperling zum Hunde: "Da bleib stehen, ich will dir ein Stück Fleisch herunterpicken," setzte sich auf den Laden, schaute sich um, ob ihn auch niemand bemerkte, und pickte, zog und zerrte so lang an einem Stück, das am Rande lag, bis es herunterrutschte. Da packte es der Hund, lief in eine Ecke und fraß es auf. Sprach der Sperling: "Nun komm mit zu einem andern Laden, da will ich dir noch ein Stück herunterholen, damit du satt wirst." Als der Hund auch das zweite Stück gefressen hatte, fragte der Sperling: "Bruder Hund, bist du nun satt?" - "Ja, Fleisch bin ich satt," antwortete er, "aber ich habe noch kein Brot gekriegt." Sprach der Sperling: "Das sollst du auch haben, komm nur mit." Da führte er ihn an einen Bäckerladen und pickte an ein paar Brötchen, bis sie herunterrollten, und als der Hund noch mehr wollte, führte er ihn zu einem andern und holte ihm noch einmal Brot herab. Wie das verzehrt war, sprach der Sperling: "Bruder Hund, bist du nun satt?" - "Ja," antwortete er, "nun wollen wir ein bißchen vor die Stadt gehen."

Da gingen sie beide hinaus auf die Landstraße. Es war aber warmes Wetter, und als sie ein Eckchen gegangen waren, sprach der Hund: "Ich bin müde und möchte gerne schlafen." - "Ja, schlaf nur," antwortete der Sperling, "ich will mich derweil auf einen Zweig setzen." Der Hund legte sich also auf die Straße und schlief fest ein. Während er dalag und schlief, kam ein Fuhrmann herangefahren, der hatte einen Wagen mit drei Pferden und hatte zwei Fässer Wein geladen. Der Sperling aber sah, daß er nicht ausbiegen wollte, sondern in dem Fahrgleise blieb, in welchem der Hund lag. Da rief er: "Fuhrmann, tu's nicht, oder ich mache dich arm!" Der Fuhrmann aber brummte vor sich: "Du wirst mich nicht arm machen," knallte mit der Peitsche und trieb den Wagen

über den Hund, daß ihn die Räder totfuhren. Da rief der Sperling: "Du hast mir meinen Bruder Hund totgefahren, das soll dich Karre und Gaul kosten." - "Ja, Karre und Gaul," sagte der Fuhrmann, "was könntest du mir schaden!" und fuhr weiter. Da kroch der Sperling unter das Wagentuch und pickte an dem einen Spundloch so lange, bis er den Spund losbrachte: da lief der ganze Wein heraus, ohne daß es der Fuhrmann merkte. Und als er einmal hinter sich blickte, sah er, daß der Wagen tröpfelte, untersuchte die Fässer und fand, daß eins leer war. "Ach, ich armer Mann!" rief er. "Noch nicht arm genug," sprach der Sperling und flog dem einen Pferd auf den Kopf und pickte ihm die Augen aus. Als der Fuhrmann das sah, zog er seine Hacke heraus und wollte den Sperling treffen, aber der Sperling flog in die Höhe, und der Fuhrmann traf seinen Gaul auf den Kopf, daß er tot hinfiel. "Ach, ich armer Mann!" rief er. "Noch nicht arm genug," sprach der Sperling, und als der Fuhrmann mit den zwei Pferden weiterfuhr, kroch der Sperling wieder unter das Tuch und pickte den Spund auch am zweiten Faß los, daß aller Wein herausschwankte. Als es der Fuhrmann gewahr wurde, rief er wieder: "Ach, ich armer Mann!" Aber der Sperling antwortete: "Noch nicht arm genug," setzte sich dem zweiten Pferd auf den Kopf und pickte ihm die Augen aus. Der Fuhrmann lief herbei und holte mit seiner Hacke aus, aber der Sperling flog in die Höhe, da traf der Schlag das Pferd, daß es hinfiel. "Ach, ich armer Mann!" - "Noch nicht arm genug," sprach der Sperling, setzte sich auch dem dritten Pferd auf den Kopf und pickte ihm nach den Augen. Der Fuhrmann schlug in seinem Zorn, ohne umzusehen, auf den Sperling los, traf ihn aber nicht, sondern schlug auch sein drittes Pferd tot. "Ach, ich armer Mann!" rief er. "Noch nicht arm genug," antwortete der Sperling, "jetzt will ich dich daheim arm machen," und flog fort.

Der Fuhrmann mußte den Wagen stehenlassen und ging voll Zorn und Ärger heim. "Ach!" sprach er zu seiner Frau, "was hab ich Unglück gehabt! Der Wein ist ausgelaufen, und die Pferde sind alle drei tot." - "Ach, Mann," antwortete sie, "was für ein böser Vogel ist ins Haus gekommen! Er hat alle Vögel auf der Welt zusammengebracht, und die sind droben über unsern Weizen hergefallen und fressen ihn auf." Da stieg er hinauf, und tausend und tausend Vögel saßen auf dem Boden und hatten den Weizen aufgefressen, und der Sperling saß mitten darunter. Da rief der Fuhrmann: "Ach, ich armer Mann!" - "Noch nicht arm genug," antwortete der Sperling. "Fuhrmann, es kostet dir noch dein Leben," und flog hinaus.

Da hatte der Fuhrmann all sein Gut verloren, ging hinab in die Stube, setzte sich hinter den Ofen, ganz bös und giftig. Der Sperling aber saß draußen vor dem Fenster und rief: "Fuhrmann, es kostet dir dein Leben!" Da griff der Fuhrmann die Hacke und warf sie nach dem Sperling, aber er schlug nur die Fensterscheiben entzwei und traf den Vogel nicht. Der Sperling hüpfte nun herein, setzte sich auf den Ofen und rief: "Fuhrmann, es kostet dir dein Leben!" Dieser, ganz toll und blind vor Wut, schlägt den Ofen entzwei und so fort, wie der Sperling von einem Ort zum andern fliegt, sein ganzes Hausgerät, Spieglein, Bänke, Tisch und zuletzt die Wände seines Hauses, und kann ihn nicht treffen. Endlich aber erwischte er ihn doch mit der Hand. Da sprach seine Frau: "Soll ich ihn totschiagen?" - "Nein," rief er, "das wäre zu gelind, der soll viel mörderlicher sterben, ich will ihn verschlingen," und nimmt ihn und verschlingt ihn auf einmal. Der Sperling aber fängt an, in seinem Leibe zu flattern, flattert wieder herauf, dem Mann in den Mund. Da steckte er den Kopf heraus und ruft: "Fuhrmann, es kostet dir doch dein Leben!" Der Fuhrmann reicht seiner Frau die Hacke und spricht: "Frau, schlag mir den Vogel im Munde tot!" Die Frau schlägt zu, schlägt aber fehl und schlägt dem Fuhrmann gerade auf den Kopf, so daß er tot hinfällt. Der Sperling aber fliegt auf und davon.

[https://www.grimmstories.com/de/grimm\\_maerchen/der\\_hund\\_und\\_der\\_sperling](https://www.grimmstories.com/de/grimm_maerchen/der_hund_und_der_sperling)

## **Artwork**

**Steven B. Smith**

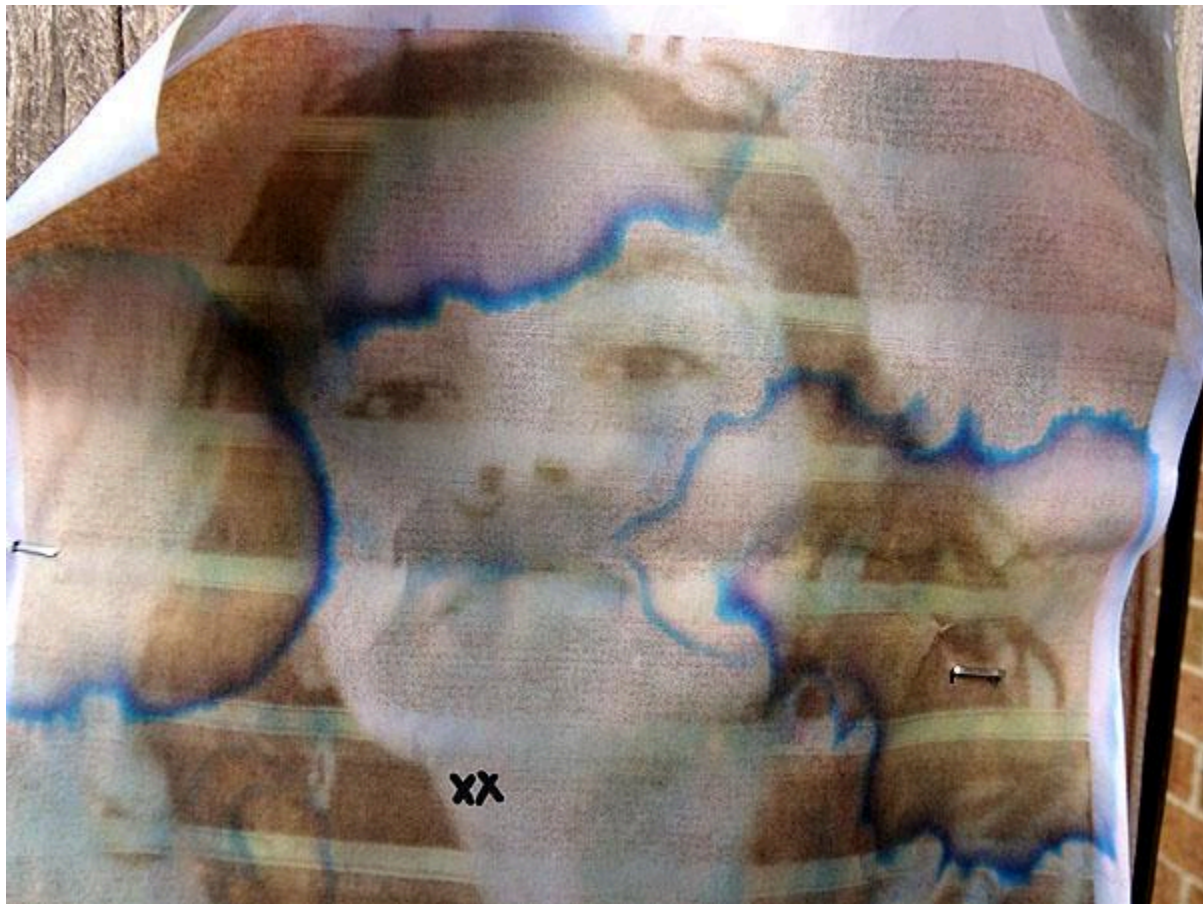


**“hot lips”**





“smoke”



“XX”

**Kathy Smith**





**In collaboration with Chat GPT and Doll-E**

## Contributors

**John Burroughs** of Cleveland has served as a Beat Poet Laureate and the founding editor of Crisis Chronicles Press. Find him at <https://linktr.ee/johnburroughs>.

**Rosa Jamali (Born 1977)** is a prolific Iranian poet, playwright, literary critic, and translator. She studied Drama & Literature at the Art University of Tehran and holds a master's degree in English literature from TEHRAN University. Jamali is acknowledged as one of the most influential and pioneering poets of Iran since the 90s. Her works have opened new landscapes and possibilities to Persian contemporary poetry. Rosa Jamali's works have been subject of numerous University thesis and Scholarly articles in Persian.

**Heather Ann Shepard** lives in Oberlin, Ohio and teaches poetry and writing at Lorain County Community College and is the editor and founder of tinfoildresses and Origami Butterfly Press. Her poems have appeared in journals such as *Pennsylvania English*, *Alekh*, and *Litterateur*.

**Marissa Prada** is a poet, author, spoken word artist, and publisher from Albuquerque, New Mexico. She began writing poetry in high school to cope with teenage stress and trauma. She has been a featured reader at multiple local and international events. Her work ranges from social justice issues and mental health, to humorous parody pieces, to sensual erotica. Marissa hosts weekly online open mics for her online platform, The Word is Write, and hosted live in person at the Nuyorican Poets Café in New York City. She was recently a featured reader at the NYC Poetry Festival. Marissa is the founder of the female-forward, Albuquerque-based press, Read or Green Books, and is the Co-Founder and Creative Director for The Word is Write on Facebook & Instagram. Marissa is a founding member of the worldwide women's poetry group, Tesoro. Read or Green Books (RGB) has published 56 books, over 200 people, and just short of 700,000 words over the past three years. RGB recently hosted the 2023 NM Poetry Summit, the largest in-person poetry event in Albuquerque in the past 20 years, with plans already in place for 2024! RGB books have been nominated for many book awards, including a Pulitzer Prize, and last year "Do I Look African Enough?" by Kimberly KMA Anderson, won the Best Indie Book Award for Poetry in 2022. Marissa has been included in multiple local and international poetry anthologies, magazines, and journals. She has three books of poetry available for purchase through Read or Green Books. Her motto is, "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." -African Proverb.

**Adam Schmidt** resides in Oberlin, Ohio. An avid photographer and learner of foreign languages, he is working toward his degree in History at Lorain County Community College.

**Kathy Ireland Smith**— A.K.A. Lady, Is A Poet, Publisher, Artist And Surreal Photographer From Northeast Ohio. She And Her Husband Smith Spent 31 Months Traveling In 10 Countries On 3 Continents From 2006-9, And You Can Follow Their Ongoing Adventures At Wal

**Steven B. Smith**—Born in the Bitterroot Mountains, raised on Paradise Prairie, Smith is a fractal finding ambiance adjuster on the run from reality wandering the Earth having adventures with his beloved Lady. He published 21 issues of the art/poetry journal "Artrcrimes" from 1986-2006, and has been an underground presence in Cleveland's art poetry scene since moving into a downtown warehouse in 1981. His first one-person show was at Spaces in 1984. He & wife Lady spent 2006-9 living in ten countries on three continents recharging their word wells. He blogs at [walkingthinice.com](http://walkingthinice.com); has art, poetry and friends on [agentofchaos.com](http://agentofchaos.com); and 110 free songs/recitations/experiments/abominations on [reverbNation.com/mutantSmith](http://reverbNation.com/mutantSmith).