ART

Cover  Where do you belong? [pastels] • Gary Kelley
17  Landscape #18 [paper quilling] • Hannah Gebhart
27  Tree Woman [silkscreen print] • Frances Cannon
36  Working on a Dream [mixed media on panel] • Suzanne Lewis
43  Cora Melanie [wool & cotton fibers] • Angie Hall Anderson
46  Barred Owl [pen & ink] • Stratten Peterson
53  Elk Landscape [pen & ink] • Stratten Peterson
58  Euphoria [wool & cotton fibers] • Angie Hall Anderson
64  Landscape #4 [paper quilling] • Hannah Gebhart
70  Landscape #1 [paper quilling] • Hannah Gebhart
79  Learning to Fly [oil on canvas] • Michele Poirier Mozzone
84  Queen Susan #4 [photography, film, 35mm] • Raye Hendrix
93  Alana Lapis [wool & cotton fibers] • Angie Hall Anderson
103  Landscape #2 [paper quilling] • Hannah Gebhart
106  Mushroom King [pen & ink] • Stratten Peterson
111  Beginnings [mixed media eleven-color silkscreen print over an archival digital print] • Carl-Peter Mayer

FICTION

26  The Life & Assumed Death of the Baronness • tammy lynne stoner
37  Maria’s Mixtape • Jessica A. Kent
42  Love at a Girls’ School • Diana Altman
52  The Axe • Mark Ennis
64  The House Under the Mountain • Minyoung Lee
71  The Bus from Kasmir • Bipin Aurora
85  Yellow Paint • Mars Girolimon
102  She Began Her Vacation in the Country • G. W. Clift
107  Risk of Extinction • Paula Sábat Martínez

NONFICTION

17  Still Unfinished: Martha Graham’s Appalachian Spring and Ours • Bonnie Costello
47  No Relation • Megan Sandberg-Zakian
59  Madness: A Reader’s Companion • Wendy Chen
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99  Body/Mind Braid • Esinam Bediako
110  Our Future Ruins • Adam Koehler

POETRY

5  Death Letter #5 • Sean Thomas Dougherty
6  On Cannibals • Zachary Bos
6  The Myth of Timelines • Mag Gabbert
7  A braid of unknowing I tie before you • Karan Kapoor
8  Half Kaddish • Misha Tentser
8  Schrödinger’s Cat • Macaulay Glynn
9  Inheritance • Carly Marie DeMento
9  Dear twentieth century, dear grandfather: • Charity Gingerich
10  The Anthropocene: A Poem in Glitches • Mag Gabbett
10  Alternating Current • F. J. Bergmann
11  Poem with an Epigraph from Ovid • Jen Grace Stewart
11  Splash Study • Leigh Lucas
On December 29, 2022, the New York Times ran a centenary obituary. Better late than never: “Poetry Died 100 Years Ago This Month,” explains Matthew Walther, founding editor of The Lamp, a fledgling bi-monthly of the orthodox Catholic persuasion. By now, such confident declarations of death have become commonplace. Since at least the 1980s, a self-appointed arbiter every so often feels the need to enlighten the public on the relative vitality of capital-P Poetry. They either bury its long dead corpse and offer a grievous post-mortem or sit vigil bedside in hospice care, lamenting the good old days when it played a more central role in American life. Poor thing. Most prominently, in 1988 Joseph Epstein initiated a decades-long murder mystery in the pages of Commentary by asking “Who Killed Poetry?” inspiring Morris Freedman’s “Slowing the Decline of Poetry” later that year. A slew of concurring and dissenting opinions have followed. Donald Hall’s spirited 1989 rallying cry in Harper’s, “Death to the Death of Poetry,” offers hope for those who may be inclined to despair: “While most readers and poets agree that ‘nobody reads poetry’…maybe a multitude of nobodies assembles the great audience Whitman looked for.” Dana Gioia’s anxious Atlantic essay “Can Poetry Matter?” in 1991 spells out step-by-step instructions for how to make it do so. Four years later, Freedman checks poetry’s pulse in the Virginia Quarterly Review with “How Dead is Poetry?” concluding that we must “keep standards pure” and “evaluate fairly and confidently on the basis of universal and ageless criteria” if we are to “take poetry seriously.” Sounds like fun.

The back and forth over the unfortunate death of Poetry continues apace: “Poetry is Dead,” announces Bruce Wexler in a 2003 Newsweek editorial, asking, “Does Anybody Really Care?” D. W. Fenza, erstwhile Executive Director of AWP wonders defensively, “Who Keeps Killing Poetry?” in a 2006 Writer’s Chronicle diatribe. In her 2013 takedown “Is Poetry Dead?” Virginia Post columnist Alexandra Petri answers her own question in the affirmative, followed up two years later in the same pages by Christopher Ingraham’s “Poetry is Going Extinct,” which ushers forth actual government data (“gasp”) to prove once and for all that indeed it is. Reporting for CNN in 2015, Brandon Griggs asks, “Does Poetry Still Matter?” observing that “poetry, once a preeminent form of entertainment, has long since receded to the far, dusty corners of popular culture.” We prefer Kevin Young’s response in his 2012 manifesto “Deadism,” which squares the circle by conceding: “Let it be dead; let us write as if we are already dead…. Only by writing a dead poetry, a zombie poetry, can the thing come back to life, not so much reborn as born for the first time.”