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FEATURE

Poetry in the Time of Pandemic

This is a collection of poems written by NAPT members during these last months of pandemic and more recently, weeks of protest. They offer insight into both diverse personal and shared communal experiences, and demonstrate the power of poetic expression.

These days

These days
In front of the mirror
You discover the wildest part of yourself
The one that you have always hidden
And that now rebels like trees in the city
centre

*Questi giorni
Di fronte allo specchio
Scopri la parte più selvaggia di te
Quella che hai sempre nascosto
E che ora si ribella come alberi nel centro
città*

These days
They do not leave you to do much
But they keep you warm
As a soft and heavy blanket

*Questi giorni
Non ti lasciano fare molto
Ma ti tengono al caldo
Come una morbida e pesante coperta*

These days
You can travel to your loved ones
As if they were a lonely island
To discover new things about them
How many little spoons in the coffee
How many rusks with honey and butter

*Questi giorni
Puoi viaggiare verso chi ami
Come se fossero un'isola solitaria
Per scoprire nuove cose di loro
Quanti cucchiaini nel caffè
Quante fette biscottate con miele e burro*

These days
Crocuses silently blossom
Domestic quarrels are storms
Out of your window

*Questi giorni
I crochi sbocciano silenziosamente
Litigate domestiche sono tempeste
Fuori dalla tua finestra*

These days
Future waits for you
Out of your messy and tiny house
It took decades to make it yours.

*Questi giorni
Il futuro ti aspetta
Fuori dalla tua piccola ed incasinata casa
Ci sono voluti decenni per renderla tua.*

—Nicole Bizzotto, Rossano Veneto, Italy

Photograph by Laura Santner



Continued on page 4

Contributed by Karen (Ren)
vanMeenen, MA, MA, CPF



The month of April usually brings NAPT's conference, an exciting yearly opportunity for in-person connection and sharing. As NAPT members know, the 2020 conference, scheduled to be held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, was cancelled due to the increasing pandemic threat. I invite you to read the NAPT News column in this issue and see our website at poetrytherapy.org for details on what NAPT has been and will be doing in lieu of meeting in person this year.

Although the pandemic has affected nearly every aspect of daily life, what has not been suppressed by our current circumstances, and seems instead to be blossoming, is creativity—and the need for personal expression so often finds a home in poetry. We have read poems on the internet that have stemmed from new challenges and possibilities. We have been writing them ourselves. We have shared them through blogs and social media and in venues such as the new NAPT open mic sessions held via Zoom. Some of us have formed or joined new writing groups. We continue to listen to each other. In that spirit, as the Summer issue of *The Museletter* usually focuses on a wrap-up of the conference, this year's July issue is dedicated to original works of poetic and visual expression by NAPT members. Herein you will find dozens of poems written from the heart, intersected by paintings and poems. Also, in her regular column, The Journaler's Corner, Beth Jacobs speaks specifically to journaling during these unprecedented times. Read on for inspiration, and for renewed connection with one another.

Until we meet again, wishing you good health and a poetic spirit.

IN THIS ISSUE: JULY 2020

Poetry in the Time of Pandemic	1
From the Editor	2
President's Message	3
NAPT News	14
Journaler's Corner	15
New Books	17
PoemNation	18
Chapbook	23

MUSELETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINES:

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Please address all submissions inquiries to:
Karen (Ren) vanMeenen, Editor of *The Museletter*,
naptpublications@yahoo.com

Address all subscription inquiries, general NAPT inquiries, memberships, address changes, and administrative business to:

National Association for Poetry Therapy
E-mail: naptadmin@poetrytherapy.org
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I joined the NAPT Board right when COVID-19 was turning into a pandemic of devastating magnitude. Now we are faced with the aftermath of racial injustice that breathes in the brutal events that have taken more Black lives. The number of victims of both maladies is dumbfounding. A rather harsh landing and at the same time an opportunity for me and the other members of the board to focus on the meaningful work we are committed to doing. I trust that we are standing on the edge of change. Poetry Therapy is a unique tool to advance radical transformation.

Writing is a way to “tune” the inner world so we can show up in an efficient way to the outer work we must do. As Rhonda Magee, the author of *The Inner Work of Racial Justice*, puts it: “Racial justice is about taking actions against racism and in favor of liberation, inspired by love for all humanity, including actions at the personal, interpersonal, and collective levels.” We know the future will bring significant challenges as we recover from the latest events of 2020. Poetry can guide us in the simple practice of acceptance of things precisely as they are and will give us discernment to know how to rise from the rubble with self-awareness and compassion toward others and ourselves. Let’s take our most valuable tool kit and go partake in the restoration of our world. I look forward to working with poets, social workers, therapists, educators, and our mentor supervisors and regional representatives in creating new ways to expand to the farthest reaches and bring healing, growth, and transformation where they are needed.

It is a privilege to work alongside the old and new members of the NAPT board: Laurie Anderson-Sathe, Lorriann Geyer, Jazmin Hamilton, Lisa Haversack, Barbara Kreisberg, Erick Kreuter, Nick Mazza, Irania Macías Patterson, Sherry Reiter, Robin Rosado, Laura Santner, Catherine Tanguis, and Karen vanMeenen.

We will continue to devote efforts to increasing our diverse membership and strengthening our professional partnerships with the International Federation of Biblio/Poetry Therapy (IFBPT), the National Coalition of Creative Arts Therapies (NCCATA), and the National Organization of Arts in Health Care (NOAH). With their support, we will also continue to expand the power of the arts to heal, foster growth and development, and promote social justice.



Please send your writing contributions to our publications: *The Museletter* and the *Journal of Poetry Therapy*. We are forever grateful to Karen vanMeenen and Nick Mazza for their invaluable contribution to a sustained scholarship through both publications. Special thanks to James Brandenburg, Elaine Brooks, Geri Chavis, Jennifer L. Graham, Samantha Gray, Alison Johnson, Barbara Kreisberg, Emily Marsick, Sherry Reiter, Laura Santner, and Nancy Scherlong for the magnificent webinars they offered in lieu of our annual conference this year. We are diligently organizing a new round of webinars to specifically address issues of racial injustice.

Peace,
Marianela Medrano, PhD, LPC, CPT
President
palabracenter@gmail.com

NAPT MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

NAPT is fortunate to be made up of talented, innovative, and accomplished members and leaders. We would like to celebrate your contributions to the field of poetry therapy. Is poetry a part of your work? Have you discovered a way to use a poem as a platform for healing, or to help others heal? Have you made a notable achievement in this field? Reach out to Laura Santner at lacre8iv@yahoo.com if you are interested in telling us what you’ve been up to with poetry therapy. NAPT will be putting some of your insights and accomplishments in the spotlight to inspire fellow NAPT members.

continued from page 1

Hope Again

For those of you whose home never had an address
 Who wandered willingly,
 And who now are grounded in place,
 Please keep moving toward what feels right
 In every corner of your heart,
 That place that you know does not always have an address,
 Just a relatively simple navigation system
 With no visible landmarks,
 A magnetic pull toward something dreamed.
 You are all like sea birds
 Or maybe turtles
 And this raw smell of the beach tells you something.
 Your compass pointing endlessly true north
 Holds the power we need right now:
 The power to hope
 Against hope
 And hope again.

—Jacqueline Uhlemann, Phoenix, Arizona

I am chasing normal,

chasing gentle stretches of time
 where I lose sight of jagged reminders
 of the straitjacket that binds our world.
 If I can only remember how to order my day,
 place pins and markers, strands of string
 around structured hours.
 But, it's the transitions that matter—
 that delicate step into the in-between time.
 That's where the darkness can seep like syrup,
 standing in an empty hallway
 on my way to change a load of laundry.
Just move to the next thing, I say.
 My notebook waits on my bed,
 my walking shoes ready by the door.
 It curls into me greedy with existential angst—
 Is this what is left, day in, day out?
 My son's gruff voice hovers
 against a closed door, his adolescence
 swallowed by these stucco walls.
 It's bigger than me, swampy holes of quicksand
 that want to suck me under, drag me to bed,
 hold shackles to my feet as I claw
 my way to the next thing. *Move quickly, I say,*
 pushing myself down the stairs to lace up my sneakers,
 step out of the faux stone arch of the iron door,
 wait for the left turn onto Agnes Street
 where the sun blankets my back,
 lifts my chin to the bluest of skies.

—Jennie Linthorst, Manhattan Beach, CA



Oxygen by Jennie C. Linthorst

A Spring Day in the Pandemic

A photographer takes pictures of a mother
 with her newborn at the beach
 but can only zoom in with the long lens
 To be born in a pandemic
 the soul must have tap dancing feet
 Every step back congratulates
 the new frame naively
 Like every day after sickness feels recovered
 Like every day not dead feels alive
 and still perspective goes on wryly growing
 Another young mother walks by
 who can text with one hand
 and push the stroller with the other
 The oblivious bunny eats grass
 and innocence continuously refills itself
 as it slips through war's vast ravine
 The hinted taste of spring air
 comes in every pore
 The unimaginable blooms
 beside a white crocus

—Beth Jacobs, Evanston, Illinois

Advice in a Locust Swarm

During the pandemic
 my Aunt Joan visits in a dream
 with two sister oracles
 floating by her side
 in the sky
 A locust swarm descends
 upon me and a tree
 The self-writhing mass
 of the insects
 with clacking clothespin
 shape and color and sound
 dims the light
 They hit my body all over
 with small thumps
 I am carefully extracting
 half a locust
 from my right ear
 and gesturing I'm Ok
 I'm fine with my left hand
 when my aunt
 speaks from above
 the noise and says
 Slow down
 Don't run in a locust swarm
 I take her advice
 and walk a path
 It helps so much
 that later I can recall
 that every process
 simply responds and turns
 in its time
 The wave gathers and shatters
 The body switches to inhale
 The swarm dips and reforms

—Beth Jacobs, Evanston, Illinois

Photograph by Laura Santner



Photograph by Laura Santner

Seeds

On my little balcony
 a ceramic St. Francis
 in cupped hands holds a bowl
 I fill with birdseed.
 The small birds are neat
 In their eating but the crows
 make a mess, scatter seeds
 all around so last summer
 I found a wobbly waving
 infant sunflower
 among the begonias

and I wonder now
 if a little bit of goodness
 over here can sprout
 some new little bit of good
 beauty for the soul
 over there and there
 and there and I do
 fervently wish it so
 because right now more
 than ever we need seeds
 of goodness to grow.

—Alma Maria Rolfs, Seattle, Washington

I Hear the Quiet Outside

A school nearby silenced
three drawn-out chimes.
The ringing countdown
now unnecessary for
there are no students
to motivate and remind.
School administrators
resistant to turn off the
symbolic echo in which
their day was confined.
Not wanting to complete
the difficult quiet task—
silencing the sound that
kept students, parents,
and teachers on track.
Resigned now, for they
must let go of what
they cannot control.

The futile bell brought
forth memories of rushed
drop-offs, scurrying shoes,
playground laughter, and,
too many cars in the
crowded neighborhood.
Bothersome at first—
scenes remembered.
For the redundant
rippling rings also
brought reminders
of a lively existence
that abruptly ended
just four weeks ago.
Like an abandoned
school, daily thoughts
now shelter fading
shadows and ghosts.
Silence now in place
of the ringing routine
with its hurry-up tone.

I miss the reminders.
I miss the scurrying.
I miss the laughter.
I miss the sounds.

Silence now, not sounds,
but a void need not remain.
The silence has revealed
itself and it is bringing
forth guarded secrets.
The silence is teaching
me valuable lessons
that can easily escape
from the constant demands
of an overflowing mind
and an over-scheduled day.
The silence is loud, but
it need not be feared.

I can fill the quiet space
with inspired daydreams—
ignoring for far too long,
with guided mediation—
connecting to everyone,
with aimless thoughts—
expanding a long day,
with music and dance—
moving body and soul,
or allow the knowing
stillness to envelop,
to protect, and teach
all I need, all it knows.
I can revisit people and
places. There are no limits
to where my mind can go.
I can watch the shadows
and the ghosts disappear
or watch as they linger
a bit longer in my mind,
on deserted playgrounds.

Wherever the quiet directs,
whatever the quiet reveals,
I have heard more than
enough to understand.
I now recognize the
quiet promises of silence—
neither empty nor broken.
In the silence is where
our unasked questions
are unveiled, delivering
honest answers and
a return to ourselves.

—Michele Lee Sefton, Peoria, Arizona

Photograph by Laura Santner



To Love the Moon

To love the moon you must
love change, you must
love and lose and lose again
and find and gain and grow
all the time knowing
the sweet light will not stay.

Moon calls to your eyes
come see, open wide
calls to your heart
come open wide
bathe in my silvery light
give your soul the sight

of my beauty while you can.
We never do know
how many changing moons
the round, the crescent,
the thin barely seen,
will companion our lives,

all the moons of a life
calling come, love me,
love me while you can.

—Alma Maria Rolfs, Seattle, Washington



Lockdown Moon; photograph by Karen (Ren) vanMeenen

Pandemic

In my house
they are not
six feet apart:
Fear, hope, anger, dread
old pain new pain
all grapple and wrestle
together
no orderly taking turns
no respectful nods,
no responsible referee
arms and legs
full chest-heavy weight
press and push and pull
roll over and under
pummel each other
fight to come out on top
squeeze and gasp
for breath—then question
the gasp: is it IT?
This pandemonium
takes place every day
in my body
in my house.

—Alma Maria Rolfs, Seattle, Washington

April 2020

The deep cruelty of not knowing,
caught in a spiderweb of unknowns,
one's own body the source
of anxious speculation.
Am I sick and don't know it? Are you?
Are we all really going to get it?
Going viral no longer metaphorical
but terrifying and real.
Who will succumb, who will be spared?
How to stare down an enemy
so mysterious, powerful,
shape-shifting, invisible...
how to live fearful of being both
endangered and dangerous –
unwilling spider, unwitting fly.

—Alma Maria Rolfs, Seattle, Washington

Ode to the Nurse during the Covid-19 Epidemic

You, remarkable nurse
Are the rock and the foundation
That hold us all up
During this pandemic isolation.

Your unbounding energy
and professionalism at work
Your care for patients, their families, and all other hospital staff
Despite the lack of caring from our deranged President, who
is a world-class jerk!

Working tirelessly
during this Covid-19 outbreak
Shows no boundaries
And history you shall make!

Your steady hand holds the hands of others
Stricken with Covid-19
Who lay alone in their hospital bed
When no family or friends are allowed to visit in-between.

Your encouraging smiles
Give strength and hope to the hospitalized
Who don't know if they will make it
Out alive or be revitalized.

Forging forward
On adrenaline
Sacrificing your own health, isolating from your own loved ones.
Offering hope and encouragement to those in hospital prison.

You, nurse, follow doctor's orders
And when they are gone,
You stay, adjusting breathing tubes
And tucking in blankets for those who are alone.

Offering food and sustenance
To the weak and inflicted
Your brave heart is known to all
And will always be depicted.

You, nurse are the lifeline
To every lonely patient in his or her hospital room
To their family and friends, it's your face they see, no one else's
Unless they can miraculously connect on Zoom.

Nurse, for all your bravery and courage
For putting yourself in harm's way
With the utmost professionalism
We, as Americans want to say

We pledge our love, gratitude and adulation.
Nurse, we honor you
And will remember you always as our true hero
With enormous admiration.

—Barbara Kreisberg, Miami, Florida



Oxygen by Jennie C. Linthorst

Gentle by Jennie C. Linthorst



Tar Island

Maybe it was
 What I thought it was
 Something that I want,
 Something that I dearly want.
 But maybe it is different.
 That which I don't want,
 That I don't want at all,
 Something to fear
 Because it demands
 Much from me
 With uncertain results.

Maybe it was
 A success from the past
 Or maybe
 A failure in the present
 That has surfaced again
 And will resurface
 Over and over,
 Until I conquer it
 Or at least
 Make peace with it.

When I am alone,
 Alone with my thoughts,
 What do I do with time?
 Do I remember
 This or that?
 Success or failure?
 Can I sit and just listen?
 Or do those thoughts
 Of this and that
 Intrude and block my sight
 Of what's right here
 Around me?

Is it better just to gaze
 At a floating cloud
 Resembling a thing?
 To feel wind upon my neck
 The sun upon my brow?
 To hear gulls cry
 Or watch a fish in clear water
 Swim this way or that?

Maybe it was meant
 For me to find a place
 Where thoughts could be let go
 Forget success,
 Forget my failures
 And be a part
 Of just what is here
 Instead of what was there.

— Paul T. McArthur, Cocoa Beach, Florida

Ardent Nearness

St. Matthew Passion, Oratorio
 Completed 1727,
 Leipzig

Bach's cooing *de cassia* oboes,
 mezzo-timbred recitatives,

towering choruses –

choruses quieting
 wounded Composer, Sacred Head.

La Sagrada Familia, Basilica
 To be Completed 2026
 Barcelona

Gaudi's visceral red-tinged porphyry,
 testudine mosaic pediments,

penultimate stone branches –

branches enjambed into a canopy of mutual delight
 holding Architect, Creator/Father.

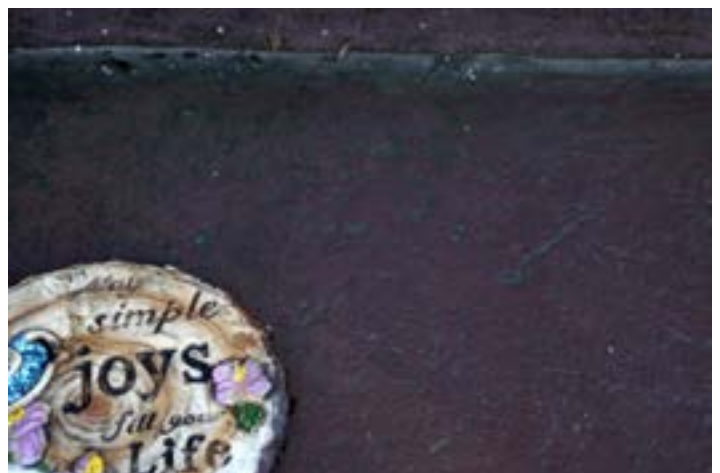
Hospital Pandemic Deaths
 Cumulative, Good Friday, 2020
 New York City

ICU Intensivist's skilled, feverish devotion,
 over 8,000 breathless, each known—

together Intensivists, Breathless, Spirit/Comforter

—Dail Duncan, Solon, Ohio

Photograph by Laura Santner



Virus

The magnolias in my front yard are blooming,
There is a blue jay sitting on my fence, peeping,
and spring rain is greening up my lawn.

Daffodils are showing their faces
en masse
in the medians of our city streets.

Regardless of our human condition,
the natural world is continuing
its normal flow.

From winter into spring
it marches without pause,
not looking back
to see if we're coming along with it.
In fact, it's thriving
because of our absence,

the lack of smoke in the air,
vehicle exhaust fogging the roads,
manufacturing waste pouring into rivers.

We are beginning to see that
another virus affecting our planet
has been our relentless abuse.

—Dottie Joslyn, Springfield, Missouri

What Will We Become?

What will we become
as we try to find our way
through this maze?
Will we move with assurance
along the winding paths
or bump into dead end after dead end
and grow frustrated and afraid
that we won't find our way out?
Will we become stronger
and more self-reliant
or shrink within ourselves
and hide from reality?
Will we be kind and generous
or selfish and angry?
What will we become
in these days of uncertainty?
The unknown can be frightening
or an exploration of what is within.
Which will we choose to follow,
the rabbit down his hole
or the sun moving across the sky?

—Dottie Joslyn, Springfield, Missouri

Unwalking the Black Cat During Covid

The one crossing my path outside
past the planter box of red geraniums.
I'm wiping down the groceries
should the corona virus crown me.
You can't be too careful at my age,
so I begin backstepping, unwalking cat's slink
in the Lysol scented air, bananas and grapes
floating in a sink of soap. It's an Irish thing,
hands covering the eyes to unsee what you saw,
unwinding the clock, which makes sense
to me curious where the day went
at bedtime when I unnews the news.
Since quarantine the top of my head has blown,
turned snow, yet the cat bears not one whisk.
Her stride uncolored me. Have I fallen
for an old conspiracy? Remember that Celts
say these cats, bless their unblinking stare,
also bring good fortune if you will,
love and good health
at the stroke of twelve,
or before if you cast your spell right. I step
outside to undo what plagues, retrace
her steps forward calling here kitty kitty,
come back. Find her in a whirl of dust
out back in the field unwinding everything.

—Perie Longo, Santa Barbara, California

Soul Repair Formula 1-20

Inspired by Karma Repair Kit 1-4 By Richard Brautigan

1. Eat healthy and unhealthy
2. Go to the bathroom
3. Pass gas
4. Clean your body clean your mind
5. Sleep and dream
6. Connect with others but remember yourself
7. Smile, laugh, cry
8. Breathe deeply and breathe often
9. Listen to nature
10. Listen to yourself
11. Explore the unknown
12. Stretch
13. Remember your past but focus on the future
14. Find your creativity
15. Be passionate about your passions
16. What is stillness? What is movement?
17. Love deeply
18. Learn all lessons
19. It's ok not to forgive and forget
20. Fear, overcome, repeat

—Laura Santner, Brooklyn, New York

Reflections on the New Abnormal: A Series of Acrostics

MASKS

M omentous shortages of
A ll health care
S upplies
K eep us on edge, unable to
S afety even in our cocooned spaces.

VENTILATORS

V entilators, there aren't
E nough, and some will die
N eedlessly because they will not be
T reated with all we *could* provide
I f we had what is required.
L ife stands still
A nd yet moves on strangely,
T oddler-like, with new, unsteady steps
O ver brambles and household obstacles, and we
R age, cry, fall, exclaim, question, yet
S till stay hopeful in spite of everything.

PANDEMIC

P eacefulness seems unattainable
A s we
N eed tranquility and reassurance
D espite all the dire predictions, assailing us from
E very
M edia source.
I nundated we are, with
C oronavirus images and talk.

CORONA

C rown-like with red spikey flowerlets, we see you
O ver and over in newspapers and television, a
R ecurrent vision of fierce beauty bringing disease, but we see
O ther images of people helping people with
N o expectation of external
A ward.

—Geri Chavis, Edina, Minnesota



Photograph by Laura Santner

On Being Lost

Not knowing how to speak Hindi
I walk down New Delhi's streets wearing a mask,
twisting words under my tongue.
I can't pronounce the name
of the Baba laughing on each saffron flower.
Nor do I really know
there are entire cities sleeping in his eyes.
Hands cupping
to hold and dry stigmas of purple crocuses.
Then I remember the universal nature of a smile
and bare my teeth from behind the mask,
but I am wearing braces and the gesture looks scary.

All I want is to burst forth into the saffron to free me,
turn myself into something sacred,
bathe in the eternal sound of singing bowls.
Namaste,
a poem I cannot speak.
Here I recognize the wind
It carries smells of putrefaction and myrrh.
I lift up a wand of burning incense to invoke
a name I want to attach to my mask.
In the scent, I grasp a phrase someone spoke in the dark
phir milengae.
Yes,
I will see you again
when the blood dries out of the saffron.
Too much red in the saffron, too much.
I know return is a line that falls noisily
I know a language in itself has no beauty
and cannot rescue us from ourselves.
I know no color saves us from impermanence,
or from being so hopelessly human.

—Marianela Medrano, New Haven, Connecticut

Life in the Time of Corona

There is no preparation for life.
It just moves up on us sometimes
without warning, quickly,
and runs us over,
or other times so slowly, we wonder
when it's going to catch up with us.

This time, it caught us unaware,
but now is moving at glacial speed
to exit from our world,
this life of isolation,
solitude, stillness,
as we try to maneuver our way through it.

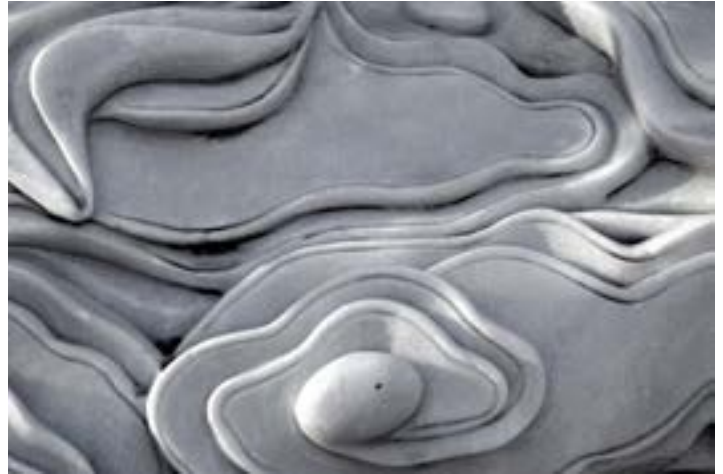
Some of us are making our way
through the maze of uncertainty
with equanimity and grace.
Some are exploding in rage and fear
crashing through the boundaries
of coherent social interaction.

How much patience do we have,
how much trust in what lies ahead?
Can we remain calm and rational,
find some peace in the current state?
The test is difficult,
and the answers murky at best.

We are out of balance.
We are alone in our capacity to understand,
though there are those who say
"we're all in this together."
In fact, we all have to grapple with how we respond
in our own separate corners.

Is there hope for resolution?
For me it is an unknown,
but for now I will wait to find out.
I won't give in to fear and anger.
I will weather the storm
in the best way I can.

—Dottie Joslyn, Springfield, Missouri



Photograph by Laura Santner

The Black Bellybutton of a Bongo

The blue-eyed grandmother,
blue-black ears
used to tell tales of boogie men,
of black boogie men.
Stories of embroidered linen,
white sheets, virginal sex,
secrets of pots and beans,
magic wand to cook good fortune.
I lost my crystal slipper in the dust
and the prince did not soothe my bruises.
Later, it was all about cactus, not tulips.
In the time set for war, grandmother,
your stories slid down my skin
—black not *trigueña*, grandmother
—woman not doll, *abuela*.
Thunder came, and lightning frayed the island
—it was the drum—
—cynical laughter bursting in curls,
tough curls fighting chemicals
singing kinkily and happily in the air.
Black, mellow, dark, beautiful majesty
I stared it in the eye,
a wide and indivisible geography.
Since then I am a doubt planting questions,
sharp arrow is my tongue, my entire body.
Before the rust I found my voice,
my eyelashes dusted time.
I am a heroine in the jungle, grandmother.
I see the night patrol, the palm trees, the fire
Yemaya with her belly made of water,
the areito, Yocahu-vagua,
a little black girl prays for water.
The *baquini* multiplies flags.
The box of many colors, did you forget it, *abuela*?
The hand closed to your bones shakes a spring of twigs
—don't be afraid, *abuela*—
Lemba greets you kindly.

—Marianela Medrano, New Haven, Connecticut

Where Do the Words Go?

Connotations shift in a blink; the course of human events has hijacked our words.
 Can we get them back? Now "back" means "forward," curves are flattened,
 we try to discern a plateau on this reconditioned frontier,
 masks denote political affiliation (The Lone Ranger was a good guy),
 zoom becomes a transitive verb, and if you go home to work, where is your cradle?
 The homeless have advice for sheltering in place.
 Freedom means to enter a saloon without a mask.
 Anniversaries speed by: Mount Saint Helens, Kent State, the hardhat march in New York City.
 My daughter in Boston sends Robert Frost asking,
 "If all the soul-and-body scars/Were not too much to pay for birth"?

Who possess the ethics to admit failure?
 One hundred years later and still a "botched civilization"?
 Humans had a good run. How fragile is this system:
 consume and intermingle or the entire network collapses?

Now we can turn the whole experiment over to the thrushes and nuthatches
 and rose-breasted grosbeaks whose tunes overflow spontaneously every 4:30 AM.

The birds and squirrels make continual collaboration beyond the open window,
 and four deer stroll across my backyard.
 On Earth Day, wolves walked across the Golden Gate Bridge.
 My friends in China can see blue in the sky.
 A saxophonist I know wears masks made by his girlfriend from his dead mother's dresses.

Thank you, Beethoven, for that 9th symphony you could not hear;
 thank you Zen Buddhists for the tea gardens of Kyoto;
 thank you John O'Donohue for, back in 2008, blessing the space between us.

I have three different books on my table titled *The Gift*.
 Reader, speak to an ancestor who immigrated ahead of you, relaying your blood forward.
 From this debris of lost words, fashion a ceremonial hymn to the circle unbroken,
 and dance just one step of thanksgiving today for the medicine of
 tomorrow morning, compounded by those who write to you that they have not given up.

—Rob Merritt, Bluefield, West Virginia

Now

In this moment the past
 rises from the rubble.
 I trace with only one eye
 the throbbing veins of history.
 An eye for an eye leaves us
 no brothers to love or hold.
 I go back to find them.
 The secret covenant looks backwards
 I hold them and feel the forward pulse
 The vanished is palpable
 larger than us.

With our magic song
 and lyrics that bind us in grace
 we travel the densest paths, free.
 Maybe the future is beyond my grasp,
 but this moment is ours.
 We have words to paint our losses,
 to keep us tightly bound
 into the now.

—Marianela Medrano, New York, New York

*Masked Frederick Douglass; photograph by
 Karen (Ren) vanMeenen*



Contributed by Catherine Tanguis, Conference Chair

In lieu of our April 2020 conference, NAPT offered a series of virtual workshops with the goals of promoting community and connection. The low-cost workshops, which ran over the course of two weeks in April and were presented by our certified members, represented a variety of themes from “Poetic Prescriptions in the Time of Corona” to “Meditation, Self-Expression, and Connection: Tools for Coping.” The culminating event was a free virtual open mic, emceed by NAPT member Zach Katz.

As we move forward in the time of the coronavirus, the surges in cases has forced our 2021 conference plans to be placed on hold for the time being. This uncertainty has not daunted our conviction and commitment, and we are continuing to expand our virtual offerings in the interim. In June, the NAPT Diversity Committee, under the

leadership of Irania Patterson, launched a virtual webinar series on the role of poetry in advancing the conversation on the problems of racial and social injustice. Moderated by NAPT President Marianela Medrano, the poets in this series will read their poetry, dialogue, and answer questions about potential steps forward. Our goal is to hold ongoing conversations among committed poets and advocates to continue shaping long-lasting changes in the social fabric of the U.S. and beyond. The panelists for our first conversation, which was held on June 27, were Jimmy Santiago Baca, Zelda Lockhart, and Afaa M. Weaver. The next panel will be held on July 25 and will feature poets John Warner Smith, Janet E. Aalfs, and Reggie Mara. Information can be found at <https://bit.ly/NAPTSocialJustice>. Registration is \$10, which will defray costs and help to start a scholarship fund for people of color to attend future NAPT conferences.

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

We want to thank our Regional Representatives who are helping to raise NAPT's visibility and promote membership in NAPT by disseminating information on the richly varied field of poetry/bibliotherapy.

Regional Representatives network with individuals, organizations, and/or institutions that are engaged in the areas of education, mental health, health care, creative arts expression, spiritual development, and/or social justice advocacy.

Please contact a representative in your area if you have questions and/or wish to get more involved. We welcome you!

U.S.:

CALIFORNIA

Cynthia Kelvin cyndikelvin@gmail.com
(Los Angeles & Santa Barbara)

Perie Longo perie@west.net
(Los Angeles & Santa Barbara)

Meral Omurtag omurtag@sbcglobal.net
(San Diego)

Jenna Robinson jennalr90@gmail.com
(San Francisco/Northern CA)

COLORADO

Carrie Vestal Gilman carrie5280@gmail.com
(Denver area)

CONNECTICUT

Nancy Scherlong nscherlonglcsww@gmail.com

ILLINOIS

Beth Jacobs jacobsbethpen@gmail.com (Chicago area)

LOUISIANA

Catherine Tanquis cftang58@gmail.com

MINNESOTA

Geri Chavis ggchavis@stkate.edu
Alison Johnson joh07504@umn.edu

NEW JERSEY

Lorrieann Geyer glorrieann@gmail.com

NEW YORK CITY

Sherry Reiter sherryreiter@yahoo.com
Laura Santner lacre8iv@yahoo.com
Robin Rosato rrosado84@hotmail.com

WESTERN NEW YORK STATE

Karen (Ren) vanMeenen naptpublications@yahoo.com (Rochester area)

NORTH CAROLINA

Irania Patterson Iraniapatterson@yahoo.com

NORTH DAKOTA & SOUTH DAKOTA

Colleen Brezny cbrezny@midco.net

OHIO

Dail Duncan dailduncan@gmail.com

OREGON

Jazmin Hamilton jazshantal@gmail.com

PENNSYLVANIA

Beth Couture bcouture@uarts.edu

TEXAS

Sharon L. Bippus sbipp@yahoo.com

UTAH

Danielle Dubrasky dubrasky@suu.edu
Scott Sorensen sorensen_s@suu.edu

VIRGINIA

Jennifer Graham jlgraham454@gmail.com (Southeastern VA)

WASHINGTON, DC/BALTIMORE AREA

Deborah Ross debrosslpc@gmail.com

OUTSIDE OF THE U.S.:

AUSTRALIA

Lowen Clarke lowenclarke@iprimus.com.au
(Melbourne/Victoria)

Robyn Youl robnyoul@gmail.com (Melbourne/Victoria)

AUSTRIA

Andrea Bramberger Andrea.Bramberger@pshsalzburg.at

ESTONIA

Berit Kaschan beritkaschan@gmail.com

UK

Jon Sayers jon@boom.co.uk

Contributed by Beth Jacobs, PhD

33: The Pandemic Journal

There is nothing left to say except grab your journal and start writing and don't stop. This is when it matters. This is when it will save you. This is journal season.

We are all going through something unexpected, unprecedented, and unfathomable. The turnings of history are not what necessarily mark this epoch, as cycles of creation and destruction, peace and calamity, have always existed on many scales. What seems most remarkable now is a shared global and human awareness. We are connected in deep time and space; we are aware of how our universe began and what is occurring in the present throughout the planet. Our interconnection is now an experience largely occurring through the technological world. The Coronavirus and the general quick upsurge of destructiveness are boundary-less forces that we can observe and try to confront as an interconnected species.

Technological media have made it possible to share personal lives in the midst of these events in a new way. Many people are physically isolated but communicating by screens in Zoom conferences, FaceTime calls, and text exchanges. The media news almost always features several personal stories to illustrate our global plight. In this context journaling is often referred to and framed as a way to communicate personal stories outward, as something else to share through technology. The uses of a journal blur between being a solitary experience and becoming a springboard for historical narrative.

There is a sudden spate of suggestions in the media about using journaling to define and preserve the current historical moment. The *New York Times* has run a series of articles recommending journaling through the pandemic. Amelia Nierenberg wrote about the possible future historical use of personal writing in an article entitled "The Quarantine Diaries" on March 30. On April 13, Jen Miller wrote a piece titled "Why You Should Start a Coronavirus Diary." She quoted many experts about diaries as historical data and only mentioned the more personal and therapeutic aspects briefly:

But the main point of this exercise shouldn't necessarily be about what other people will think about our thoughts right now. "That doesn't matter because we're writing for ourselves to find out how we feel about things," [Herbert "Tico" Braun, a history professor at the University of Virginia] said. He doesn't even like to call them diaries—he prefers the term "jottings" instead.

Two days later, Natalie Proulx wrote an article for the *New York Times* entitled "12 Ideas for Writing Through the Pandemic With the New York Times" and she made similar points with a reverse emphasis. She presented the journal as a practice for oneself but added that it could have historical

value. "Journaling is well-known as a [therapeutic practice](#), a tool for helping you organize your thoughts and vent your emotions, especially in anxiety-ridden times. But keeping a diary has an added benefit during a pandemic: It may help educate future generations."

These prescriptive articles shift an emphasis on journaling's value in a swing backward from the last several decades. Starting in the 1970s and '80s, groundbreaking writers such as Ira Progoff, Christina Baldwin, Tristine Rainer, Lucia Capacchione, and Kay Adams taught that a journal was a place to explore and not to capture. This swing back to the "diary," to the preservation of the moment for a future audience might have value in the current tumultuous time. It will be hard to describe what we are going through later. But this also dilutes other beneficial and healing powers of journaling.

The rush to share personal experience online or to use journals as public illustrations of our lives reflects something under the surface of our shared cultural experience even before the pandemic. Reality TV and various proliferating, quickening forms of social media seem to be promising the 15 minutes of worldwide fame that Andy Warhol predicted each person would have. I see this greed for public notice as an expression of a deep loneliness and neediness for attention. Ironically and sadly, the more we seem to clamor for connection, the further apart we land, physically now and often ideologically.

I believe the definition of journaling as opposed to writing a diary or an essay or a public piece is that the writing in a journal is not premeditated and is for oneself only. There is great value in writing an OpEd or a description of a social phenomenon, but the value of writing for oneself is the freedom from evaluation and the portal to discovery that writing focused on a product eschews. These modalities of writing are distinct.

In profound and existential loneliness, it does not help to reach out to broader audiences. It helps to reach in to accompany our own experience, to first discover the bedrock of immediacy in ourselves. After that what we write can ring more clearly and be heard by others in a more useful way.

The Pandemic Journal is unlike any other instrument we have known in journaling. Perhaps it must serve an unprecedented range of purposes in an unprecedented human time. In using my own journal to think about this topic, a poem arose:

Pandemic Journal

We write to document
what is unbelievable to our own selves
in the current moment's impact
to break up our stunned visions
and grind them down like
glass to a new lens constantly
We write to slow the kaleidoscope's roll
of complexity and bits of bright color
in wedges of symmetry
We write to break down
the unbearable fascination
that won't quit when we feel
how precious it all is
and how little control we own
how very little we own
We are writing because
what we call prehistory
is only a failure of imagination
in one direction
and what we call future
is only a conglomeration
of emotion turned vivid under pressure
Extreme wish and dread
the blank white made of every color
even ones we never named

The distinction of the purposes of writing matters for developing a healing writing practice, but the main point remains that it helps to write. It helps to bring language to bewilderment. It helps to form a physical response to our very physical fears and to the sudden changes in our physical comportment and modes of interacting.



Photograph by Laura Santner

I agree with Judy Reeves, who contributed a blog post titled "Writer as Witness to the World," about pandemic journaling for the website of the International Association for Journal Writing (April 25, 2020). She writes, "So it is this that you and I must do: pay attention to the world as we live in it, and write in response to what we witness. Whether in your journal or your notebook, in your daily practice or your blog; however or wherever, in whatever form or style, we must write."

I think of how apt the title of the 2002 NAPT poetry collection is: "Giving Sorrow Words." We make a donation to a world of clarity every time we bring ourselves to written creation. This is something we can do, for ourselves and for all.

The Journaler's Corner discusses personal writing as a therapeutic and artistic process. Please write with comments or suggestions: jacobsbethpen@gmail.com.

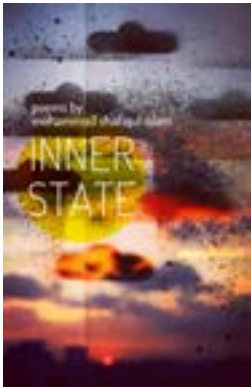
SEEKING BOOK REVIEWERS

The Museletter and The Journal of Poetry Therapy are seeking reviews of contemporary titles in writing therapy and related fields, as well as of poetry monographs and collections. [Note: Museletter contributors must be current members of NAPT, and neither publication reviews self-published books.]

Interested? Email naptpublications@yahoo.com.

NEW BOOKS

[NAPT members interested in reviewing any of the titles listed here or other books or media that might be of interest to readers of The Museletter are requested to contact the Editor at naptpublications@yahoo.com. Note: We list, but we do not publish reviews of, self-published books.]



Inner State
By Mohammad Shafiqul Islam,
2020. books.thedailystar.net



The Talking Cure
By Jack Coulehan, 2020.
www.jackcoulehan.com

REGIONAL GATHERINGS GRANTS AVAILABLE!

OVERVIEW

The grants will help current NAPT members defer costs associated with hosting regional meetings and conferences. These regional events offer presentations designed to further and/or discuss the use of language, symbol and story in therapeutic and educational capacities and promote the general activities of the National Association for Poetry Therapy. This support is both monetary and in the form of promotion of events to the general membership.

These grants are designed to provide necessary support for events that might not otherwise be able to be held. Attendance fees should be minimal, or even admission provided at no cost.

Regional conferences should provide an atmosphere where individuals can share information, learn about the field, present research (proposals and complete projects) and network with others in their region.

These grants are available for travel costs and speaking fees of presenters, room rentals, print materials, publicity, and refreshments. NAPT will also provide informational materials about the Association upon request as well as books for resale at events.

GRANT CRITERIA

Each grant application must demonstrate that the event is related to the field, provide a budget that is specific and appropriate, and indicate that other

funding sources have been investigated. Proposed matching funds must be clearly delineated in the budget and might include earned income from attendance fees, in-kind speakers, in-kind rental of meeting space, and donated printing and/or refreshments (with the exception of alcohol). Events that appeal to students and diverse audiences (through special sessions or reduced registration fees, for example) are especially welcome. The NAPT grant will not comprise more than 50% of the program budget. A brief final report form will be supplied with your grant confirmation and must be completed and submitted within four weeks of your event's conclusion.

Currently, grants are being awarded up to \$500 per approved regional event. Consideration will be given to trying to spread out the grants geographically. We hope they present opportunities for building the community of our organization as broadly as possible.

TO APPLY

Email a one-page statement of your purpose and proposed activities, including region, venue, schedule, and speakers, along with an itemized budget of projected income and expenses and full contact information for the lead organizer of the event, to Karen vanMeenen at naptpublications@yahoo.com.

This application cycle is ongoing, with applications considered in the order they are received each calendar year until that year's funds are depleted.

CLASSES / WORKSHOPS / PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

CALIFORNIA

The Southern California Poetry Therapy Network offers peer/supervision training hours for those working on their CAPF, CPT, and PTR in Santa Barbara or Los Angeles. Others interested in the process are also welcome. Facilitation practice, group supervision, skill building, case studies, and literature review are offered, supervised by Master Mentor/Supervisor Perie Longo, PhD, MFT, PTR. Open to all—writers and non-writers, educators, students, therapists, young professionals, and facilitators alike—whether looking to acquire new tools for teaching poetry to adults and children, or simply wishing to deepen your artistic self-expression. Call Perie at (805) 687-1619 or email perie@west.net for further information and/or about the next scheduled meeting.

Jennie Linthorst, MA, CAPF, of **LifeS-PEAKS Poetry Therapy** offers year-round private and group expressive writing workshops in her practice in Manhattan Beach. Jennie facilitates a monthly writing group open to the public through UCLA Arts & Healing in the Los Angeles area on Thursday evenings. Information on all of her workshops can be found on her website at www.lifespeaks-poetrytherapy.com or through email at Jennie.Linthorst@gmail.com.

FLORIDA

Reflective Writing: A Women's Writing Group meets on Monday evenings, facilitated by Barbara Kreisberg, MS, CPT. Through spontaneous guided writing experiences designed to awaken and nurture the self and through the reading of selected poems, participants will discover the process of personal growth and healing by using the written word. Participants are given the opportunity to be

moved by their own writing as well as others, with the emphasis on gaining a deeper understanding of life events, obstacles, and opportunities. Please call (305) 975-3671 or email Bkex-pres@aol.com for further information and registration.

KANSAS

Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg, PhD, facilitates ongoing **workshops for people living with or recovering from serious illness**, including cancer, at Turning Point of Kansas City: A Center for Hope and Health; workshops on the craft and passion of poetry and prose; online classes through the Transformative Language Arts Network (<http://TLANetwork.org>) and The Loft (<http://Loft.org>); and workshops on writing and healing through many venues. She also offers talks and readings, including on the writing life, the Holocaust and Polish Resistance, mythopoetics, and bioregional writing. With singer-songwriter Kelley Hunt, Caryn leads an annual Brave Voice: Writing & Singing for Your Life retreat each May in the Flint Hills of Kansas (<http://BraveVoice.com>). Her blog can be found at www.CarynMirriamGoldberg.com, and she writes regularly for the *Huffington Post* at www.huffingtonpost.com/caryn-mirriamgoldberg.

MARYLAND

Internalized metaphors that encode a client's experience and learned strategies for meeting the world are key players in his/her process of inner healing and growth. Mining Your Metaphors offers trainings in **Clean Language and Symbolic Modeling**, cutting-edge techniques for working therapeutically and experientially with these internalized metaphors. Director and lead trainer **Gina Campbell**, MEd, CAPF, is the author of the workbook series *Mining Your Client's Metaphors: A How-To Workbook on Clean Language and Symbolic Mod-*

eling. For more information visit www.miningyourmetaphors.com or email gina@miningyourmetaphors.com. Approved for credit by NFB/PT for those training in poetry therapy, with Mentor/Supervisor permission.

MASSACHUSETTS

Cheryl Buchanan is offering a new creative writing workshop at St. Francis House in Boston, a center for the poor and homeless that provides housing, medical care, clothing, meals, counseling, vocational rehabilitation, and programs in expressive art. The workshop is called "**Survivor Stories**" and aims to help improve insight and cooperative communication skills while sharing and creating poetry and literature for purposes of connection, support, and development of one's own voice. For more information email CherylBuchanan@yahoo.com.

MICHIGAN

Nessa McCCasey, CPT, PTP, Mentor, is **accepting trainees** for the Poetry Therapy Practitioner credential (through iaPOETRY). Nessa has worked as a poetry therapist since 2006. She has served NAPT as a board member (Membership VP) and as Administrator and received awards from NAPT (Distinguished Service and Outstanding Achievement). Now Nessa is Director of the credentialing organization ia-POETRY. She brings acceptance and openness to the process of training (and believes in the value of diversity in skills and abilities). Contact poet-nessa@gmail.com for more information. Further information about the credential process through iaPOETRY is found at www.ia-poetry.org.

MINNESOTA

Geri Chavis, LP, CPT, PhD, periodically facilitates a poetry therapy **supervision group** in Minneapolis. Since the early 1980s, the **Minnesota Poetry Therapy Network** has been meeting six times a year and is going strong. This peer experience poetry therapy group focuses on a particular theme, reading and creating together and sharing resources. We meet every other month on Saturdays from 10:30am to 2:30pm. For details contact Geri Chavis at ggchavis@stkate.edu or at (651) 690-6524.

NEW ENGLAND

Playback Theatre Troupe, True Story Theater offers a variety of training and performances in Playback Theatre in the Boston area. For information contact Christopher Ellinger, Artistic Director, at christopher@truestorytheater.org or visit www.truestorytheater.org.

NEW YORK CITY/
NEW JERSEY/
LONG ISLAND

The Kint Institute is pleased to announce that we are currently accepting applications for the fourth cohort in our post-graduate certificate training program in the Creative Arts Therapies and Trauma. The program meets four weekends per year in a convenient location in New York City. The first of these weekends takes place in September every year. Explore www.kintinstitute.org for more details, including training curriculum, application, and information about our cutting-edge faculty. Faculty include Dr. Shanee Stepakoff and Nancy Scherlong, both of whom are registered poetry therapists and NFBPT-approved mentor/supervisors in poetry therapy. We welcome applications from clinicians (with at least a Master's degree) who are interested in the uses

of poetry and expressive arts (music, drama, dance, visual arts) in trauma treatment. CEUs are provided for psychologists and other professionals. The portions of the program that focus on poetry therapy and are facilitated by Shanee or Nancy can be applied toward certification as a poetry therapist or certified applied poetry facilitator, in both the "peer experience" and didactic categories, and possibly also in the supervision category. Our past three years of graduates of the program have now formed a supportive, vibrant community of like-minded colleagues in the NYC area. Please consider joining us, as well as sharing the website with others who might be interested. For more information email info@kintinstitute.org.

The **Creative Righting Center** meets the first Sunday of each month from Oct. through June. Join a beautiful community of writers and therapists, librarians, chaplains, and educators for a year of Story and Poems of Presence with a focus on Mindfulness. Learn methods of growth and healing as we fire, wire, and inspire! For more information contact **Dr. Sherry Reiter** at sherryreiter@yahoo.com or (718) 998-4572.

bridgeXngs Poetry Center, Inc., is a state-of-the-art not-for-profit comprehensive poetry center and intentional community pioneering online courses for poetry therapy trainees and others, directed by Lila L. Weisberger, a New York State Licensed Creative Arts Therapist. Lila is Founder, Creative Director, and a Master Mentor with the International Academy for Poetry Therapy (iaPOETRY) and she offers training in poetry therapy to earn the credential of Poetry Therapy Practitioner. Training in poetry therapy is available for both long-distance and local trainees, in individual and small group supervision. Lila is an experienced, award-winning teacher, school psychologist, poetry therapist, and creative arts therapist. Monthly peer groups are offered in Manhattan. Online courses are offered

twice a year and include a peer group for long distance trainees; topics include a didactic and experiential course based on the text *The Healing Fountain: Poetry Therapy for Life's Journey* by Geri Chavis and Lila Weisberger; Words on a Hat—Learning Abnormal Psychology Through Literature; as well as study groups of major poetry therapy texts. Special programs include poetry with altered books and creating three-dimensional poetry dolls. For information contact Lila at bridgeXngs@aol.com or (917) 660-0440.

UNITED KINGDOM

Lapidus is the UK's national organization for Creative Writing for Health and Wellbeing. It publishes the online Lapidus Journal (www.lapidusjournal.org) three times a year (a benefit of membership), in which practitioners of therapeutic writing, writers, and others working in fields where narratives or poetry are linked with well-being share their experience and ideas. Lapidus has regional groups across the UK and holds regular events, meetings, and professional development opportunities. Visit www.lapidus.org.uk to see more about the organization, or join the thriving Lapidus page on Facebook, which is full of interesting posts and links.

Metanoia Institute offers courses in Creative Writing for Therapeutic Purposes (CWTP), including an MSc degree, in Bristol, UK, for those with an interest in literature and how it might be used to assist those experiencing life problems and for those currently working in the helping professions who seek a comprehensive training to prepare them for working in the field of creative writing for therapeutic purposes. For information email mandy.kersey@metanoia.ac.uk or see www.metanoia.ac.uk/msccwtp. Metanoia is sponsoring a conference July 13–14: Creative Bridges. NAPT's Geri Chavis will be facilitating along with speakers from Australia, Africa, France, and a range of UK practitioners. For information see <https://creativebridgesbristol.com>.

ONLINE /
VIRTUAL /
REGION-FREE

Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg is now offering a limited number of **coaching opportunities**—custom-designed one-on-one programs in writing (editing, revising, publishing, and more), workshop facilitation, and related topics—face-to-face, or by phone or video conferencing. If this speaks to you, please contact her at carynmirriamgoldberg@gmail.com to set up a free 20-minute visit to discuss your interests, how she can help, and best next steps. For more information visit <http://carynmirriamgoldberg.com>.

As well as her regular teaching and courses in therapeutic writing, **Victoria Field**, Mentor-Supervisor, is now bringing together her poetry therapy work under the umbrella of **The Poetry Practice** (www.thepoetrypractice.co.uk) and always welcomes comment and contact. Vicky is also now a tutor at the Professional Writing Academy. In the course **Running Writing Groups**, you can discover how to design, launch, and facilitate your own writing group. This 6-week online course will furnish writers, academics, and counselors with the skills and confidence to run writing workshops. As you work through each weekly session, you will explore what makes an effective writing group environment, gain the tools and resources for designing a writing group of your own, and devise a strategy for delivering workshops. The course is led by experienced practitioners **Victoria Field** (www.thepoetrypractice.co.uk) and **Anne Taylor**. The start dates are in Jan., April, and Sept. each year. For more information and to register go to www.profwritingacademy.com/courses/running-writing-groups. In the 8-week online course **Introduction to Therapeutic and Reflective Writing**—the first of its kind—participants explore the ways and range of contexts in which this type of writing can be used and experience its value directly. The course provides skills, techniques, and valuable resources for both personal exploration and for use with

clients and groups. The course is led by experienced practitioners **Victoria Field** (www.thepoetrypractice.co.uk) and **Anne Taylor**. The start dates are in Jan., April, and Sept. each year. For more information and to register go to www.profwritingacademy.com/courses/therapy-and-personal-development-writing.

Writing for Life: Creating a Story of Your Own by Sandra Lee Schubert.

The journaling and scrapbooking techniques taught in this course provide a creative way to connect with the inner self and heal emotional wounds while documenting your story, your life, in a fun and unique way. For more information and to sign up visit www.selfhealingexpressions.com/courses/writing-to-heal.

The International Academy for Poetry Therapy (iaPOETRY) offers training in poetry therapy to earn the credential of Poetry Therapy Practitioner (PTP) and is currently accepting highly motivated people for training. Mentors are available internationally and use technology to bridge distances. The curriculum is adapted to meet the learning style of each trainee while covering all the material that leads to excellence in the field. Mentors teach in a supportive (and often collaborative) environment. There are offered both in person and through online peer groups. Mentors collaborate and cross-train to best meet the needs of all trainees. See the iaPOETRY website (www.iapoetry.org) for details about the training process and a list of mentors.

GRADUATE EDUCATION

Goddard College's Transformative Language Arts (TLA) Master's Program allows students to pursue social and personal transformation through the spoken and written word through a deep exploration of your personal TLA practice (as a writer, storyteller, etc.) as well as the social and cultur-

al picture informing your particular focus of study (a focus you choose!). TLA students may also fulfill many of the poetry therapy certification requirements through this degree. TLA criteria include a community-based practicum, thesis project of your own design, and a balance between theory and practice in your study and art of words. Students also have opportunities to shadow poetry therapy and related practitioners around the world. TLA is available as a concentration in the Individualized MA, Health Arts and Sciences, and Social Innovation and Sustainability programs, all of which are part of the Goddard Graduate Institute. For more information visit www.goddard.edu/academics/goddard-graduate-institute or email Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg at caryn.mirriamgoldberg@goddard.edu.

The Transformative Language Arts Network offers online classes as well as the first certification in Transformative Language Arts. The TLA Network Foundations certification is an introduction to TLA in theory and practice with opportunities for reflecting and acting on ethical work, community networking, and TLA in action. The certification covers TLA in theory and practice, ethics and values, TLA in action, community and networking, and an introduction to right livelihood. Learn more at <http://TLANetwork.org>.

Pacifica Graduate Institute's accredited MA/PhD program in Mythological Studies cultivates the mythic imagination through a strong grounding in a variety of mythic narratives and religious traditions. Students discover recurring mythic themes in classic and contemporary literature, theater, art, and film, while recognizing cultural and historical contexts. Fostering the confluence of scholarship and imagination, the program invites students into the art of writing. The program especially emphasizes the interpretative modes of depth psychology, particularly the influences that derive from Sigmund Freud, C.G. Jung, Marie-Louise von Franz, and James Hillman. Joseph Campbell's groundbreaking work

and insights also inform the program. Pacifica has developed educational formats that are particularly well suited to individuals who wish to pursue graduate education while continuing their existing professional and personal commitments. When students begin their studies at Pacifica Graduate Institute, they join a cohort of like-minded students who are also enrolling in that particular degree program. A very real sense of community is soon established as students collaborate within their cohorts and share the intense experiences that are part of graduate-level work at Pacifica. The MA/PhD Mythological Studies program is currently accepting applications. For more information visit <http://pacifica.edu> or call (805) 969-3626 x305.

CALLS FOR WORK/ PAPERS/ARTICLES/ PROPOSALS/ PRESENTATION

The *Museletter* is seeking writers of book reviews; "Profiles" of organizations and individuals; "Poems as Process" writing prompts; "Happenings" reports on conferences and other creative arts therapies events; "Chapbook" poems of up to 20 lines (with 150-200 word accompanying narrative about the therapeutic aspects of writing the poem); Good Works (essays on particularly effective poetry therapy projects you are facilitating as part of your volunteer, in-service, or professional endeavors); interviews with NAPT's Muses, poets and creative arts therapies practitioners; and other feature articles. The Editor welcomes proposals three or more weeks in advance of submission deadlines from current NAPT members. As we are unable to publish all the submissions we receive, please refer to issues of the *Museletter* for general style and content or query the Editor before submitting a proposal or article. See this issue for upcoming deadlines and email naptpublications@yahoo.com for more information or with your ideas.

The Journal of Poetry Therapy: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Practice, Theory, Research, and Education (Promoting Growth and Healing Through Language, Symbol, and Story) (www.tandf.co.uk/Journals/titles/08893675.asp) is an interdisciplinary journal seeking manuscripts on the use of the language arts in therapeutic, educational, and community-building capacities. *The Journal* purview includes bibliotherapy, healing and writing, journal therapy, narrative therapy, and creative expression. *The Journal* welcomes a wide variety of scholarly articles including theoretical, historical, literary, clinical, practice, education, and evaluative studies. All manuscripts will be submitted for blind review to the JPT editorial board. Maximum length of full-length articles is 30 pages (typed, double-spaced, nonsexist language). Style should conform to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). All articles must be original material, not previously published or soon to be published elsewhere. Manuscripts should be submitted in electronic format (MS Word) as an e-mail attachment to Nicholas Mazza, PhD, Editor, *Journal of Poetry Therapy*, at nfmazza@fsu.edu. For book review inquiries, please email Ren vanMeenen at naptpublications@yahoo.com.

The Canadian Art Therapy Association Journal, which publishes on a variety of subjects relevant to Art Therapy and Expressive Arts Therapies, is seeking submissions. For more information visit <http://canadianarttherapy.org>.

RESOURCES

The website of the National Association for Poetry Therapy has resources on events, training, and more, including a new bibliographic resources section. Visit www.poetrytherapy.org.

The Transformative Language Arts concentration at Goddard College has extensive resource pages on poetry therapy, poetics and poetry, expressive and creative writing, drama therapy, education and development, facilitation and leadership, journal writing, literacy and linguistics and language, memoir and life stories, mythology, and more. The resource pages include thousands of weblinks and extensive bibliographies. You can click and visit many sites of people doing all kinds of poetry therapy-related work around the world! Please visit the TLA Resource Page at www.TLAresources.wordpress.com and if you have any additions, please contact Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg at mirriamgoldberg@goddard.edu.

NETWORKING/ GET INVOLVED

Ed. Note: This section of PoemNation provides a forum for NAPTers to exchange ideas and contact information pertaining to specific work being undertaken outside of the realm of NAPT proper. Please send your text of 150 words maximum to naptpublications@yahoo.com with the subject line: PoemNation Networking.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Ed. Note: This section provides students and researchers a forum for obtaining information from and establishing connections with the poetry therapy community. Send information about your research projects, including what information you are seeking, from whom, for what purpose, and by when (maximum of 200 words) to naptpublications@yahoo.com with the subject line: PoemNation: Research Projects.

Literacy and social justice. Our research project refers to the outstanding potential of poetry to enhance social spaces where people come to their voice, diligently reveal and conceal, are heard and listen to each other, ar-

gue their positions and assumptions—in short: *find themselves in language*. Schools and universities are supposed to provide equal learning opportunities for everyone. Simultaneously they tend to establish legitimate, authorized language, following traditional perceptions of knowledge and modes of decoding spoken/written texts, thus strengthening or weakening the position of particular individuals and groups. The research project reconceptualizes literacy focusing on social justice. It develops a concept where the writing of poetry offers equal learning opportunities for everyone as their experiences and perceptions codetermine what is considered as knowledge. Teaching artists will work with this concept with students in the elementary school affiliated to our University of Education, teaching and encouraging students to write poems. Our questions to the NAPT community are: Would you please share your experiences about the effects of teaching students (age 5 to 9) to write poetry? In which ways did the teaching affect students? Thank you so much for your support. For more information contact Andrea Bramberger, Prof. Dr., University of Education Salzburg, andrea.bramberger@phtsalzburg.at, or Sabine Seichter, Prof. Dr., University of Salzburg, sabine.seichter@sbg.ac.at.

Potential of written and spoken poetry to facilitate meaning making and recovery for individuals who have experienced psychosis. This PhD research, being undertaken at the University of Nottingham, seeks to explore the potential relationship between poetry and psychosis. The research is focused on asking the questions of; can written and spoken poetry support meaning making? Does this process of meaning making help people who have experienced psychosis in their recovery? The research continues to build on a recently published conceptual review (which can be found at <https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/rmh/article/view/33919>) and is currently seeking to interview either individuals who have lived experi-

ence of psychosis and who have written/engaged with poetry; and practitioners or therapists who use poetry therapeutically within their work. The interviews are being conducted either online or by telephone and last approximately 40mins. The interviews prioritize the individual's narrative and will center on the individual's story about their relationship/ experiences with poetry.

If you are interested in taking part in the research, or you would like to discuss the research further, please contact Mark Pearson (mark.pearson@nottingham.ac.uk).

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CREDENTIAL HOLDERS

The **International Federation for Biblio/Poetry Therapy** (IFBPT, formerly NFBPT) is seeking new members for its Board of Directors. As the Federation continues to expand its outreach globally we are excited to welcome credential holders to support our mission of setting and maintaining standards for practice and training. Board service will enhance your understanding of IFBPT policies and your connection to our professional community. As a board member you will help to strengthen the public perception of Biblio/Poetry Therapy as a credible creative arts therapy. If you would like more information about this opportunity, please contact Elaine Brooks and Nancy Scherlong at president@ifbpt.org. We look forward to talking with you.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRAINEES

Ed. Note: This section of PoemNation provides a space to spread the word about opportunities for trainees to become directly involved in poetry therapy work and practice. Please send your text of 100 words maximum to napt-publications@yahoo.com with the subject line: PoemNation: Trainees.

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Videos of NAPT conference keynote poets, including Rafael Campo (Miami, 2003), Li-Young Lee (Costa Mesa, 2004), Lawson Inada (Portland, OR, 2007) and Patricia Smith (Minneapolis, 2008) as well as Ken Gorelick (Keynote Speaker, 1998) are available on DVD for \$12 each, which includes priority mailing, or receive three for \$25. Also available for \$12 is the 2007 Rattlebox Open Mic session. The three LaperTapes documentary DVDs on poetry as healing are \$20 each, including priority mailing. These are "The Truth About Ourselves: How Poetry Heals," "Tell All the Truth: How Poetry Heals A Multicultural Society" and "Moving Towards Truth: Poetry, Motion and Wholeness." As a package, all three are specially priced at \$40 (one free!). Please email orders or requests for further information to jennylaper@yahoo.com.

Contributed by Bill Ratner

— Los Angeles, California

Sequester Ride

A limo, I want a limo for this so I can stand up and stick my head out the sunroof and sniff the pollen and sneeze, smell cheeseburgers and kimchee, deep-fried Snickers and runners' sweat, the black rich rubber on racing bikes, fried catfish and brine all in the air.

I'll breathe, tap my lips, massage my jaws, ball up my large hand and thump my thymus, leave the slog of dreams behind, and levitate like a pudgy bodhisattva rising over his cushion. I will take Vitamin C, maybe a whole gram a day.

I'll ignore the glossy black funerary decorations, the placards of grief. I will float like a sudden blown kite shaking my careful tail so high I'll see yogis performing asanas on the mountaintop. I'll hear the sounds of drums and whistles, grateful cries from the windows.

I won't be able to sleep. I'll test my fear, finger the air, float back and forth in a sky-blue sack like a Malibu seal. Sirens will go off in the desert for a sale at Wal-Mart, I'll buy Dexatrim and apple-scented room fresheners,

watch demos of shiny blenders, knife sets, and Japanese Bourbon. I'll grab free paper cups of cheddar cubes and soy drinks. I'll go take in the poppies. I'll park right by sidewalks full of people in shorts and smiles with quesadillas and little kids.

I want all this in one huge breath, a vista of life and population, laughs echoing through the crowd, a living urbanity. Driver, don't drop me off yet. Just go around, one more time, one more breath, before sunset.

Bill writes: "I wrote this poem during the ninth week of the COVID-19 sequester as a whirlwind fantasy of everything I would like to see, smell, taste, feel, hear, and do before the coronavirus curtain descended upon me. I was aided in part by prompts learned in recent NAPT online workshops. Earlier in the quarantine I wrote a poem that was somber and reflective, but like with so many others, my energy, outlook, emotions, and expectations change day to day. When I began this poem, having nearly all avenues of normal activity and human interchange cut off by current circumstances, I was propelled by a yearning for more human contact, more tactile experience, more life. Sequester Ride is what emerged."