

Poetry Series

nathan martin
- poems -

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nathan martin(uno 16 80)

i was born in lincoln city oregon 1980, i was really fat at birth 11 pounds so my nickname was lincoln city fats, are local vocano st helens blew that same year sending ash around the world, since then not much has happened. i like soccer, motorcycles, and seattle 90's rock music. as far as poets i like james wright, dylan thomas, peter bakowski, maybe a few others. laters nate

'the world's a popular disease, that reigns within the froward heart and frantic brains of poor distempered mortals.'

1980 Cordoba

the sun overhead is noticably upset.

the sun is late in the evening raging
through its galitic colisack.

round and round it goes.

the sun is a 1980 chrysler cordoba.

the sun has an eight track that plays
lou rahls 'love is a hurtin thing'.

nathan martin

A Girl Named Sudoku

she told me a few variables then
kept nine secrets for herself

she asked me for three words
that i could not give her

she scattered my nines and
turned my weekends into a
dewey decimated drama

she gave me her digits in a dimly
lit bar while drinking saki and
putting her makeup on with
paint by numbers.

sudoku take your cubed gray
lined face off of my front
porch for good.

nathan martin

A Mosquito's Religion

before the hemoglobin rush's in parting life from life.
empty abdomens swirl from the dust. born to die,
their parasitical humor is a terror in the ear.

blood from wine in the vein.
drawn past the epidermal sanctity
of a crimson relic.

swiftly they fly about seeking that aching moment.
with tourniquet wings buzzing set in
veneration about their host.

and for a brief moment they seem holy
enough to not need to mend their religion
and carry out these kindless proverbs.

but then falling from grace so gently
they descend down thouching lightly
with the bent legs of a sinner
needing redemption.

nathan martin

A Slow Quiet Morning

small old house with
blackberry bushes
gathering in the backyard

squirrels climbing on a railroad
tie stuck in the ground,
sitting with folded hands
to say thier morning prayers.

the liturgies of autumn
held in broken twigs
scattered around

st ignatious in the folded
leaved piety of late february

and me in the kitchen
looking out the window
with a bowl full of scottish
oatmeal.

oat's and prayers
all morning long,

like adam in the garden
i busy myself naming
the animals

i might just call him
the abbot i think,

looking down into the
sink full of dirty dish's
they can wait, for later

nathan martin

A Sports Game And A Cup Of Tea

Instant faith like a tea kettle,
waiting for the whistle is the hardest part.
staring at the stove top
watching heat and water move,

stirring atoms with a spoon
demi-god of all that is kitchen

now some say the world will end in fire some say ice
valhalla with camomile sounds so nice.

my world is elemental, still and calm
my world is sunday afternoon

and liverpool plays fulham
waiting for the whistle is the hardest part

nathan martin

Across The Tracks

down along 42nd and cypress st
the allegorical prostitutes say thier not street
hookers but just a symbol of sex.,

just like the walking sign post
stop, merge left, bump,
narrow road ahead.

cracked pavement and raindrops,
concaved inward and downward
awake the cornerstreet prophet and
pattern out a little mercy for the junkies
spinning double helix faith.

such a beautiful gray angelican, the
cigarette littered sidewalk somehow
seems to resurrect its stone geist.

with dreams of a sandlewood
gossamer in its head.

but he must know just like all
the others to the east, hawthorn st
and alder st, birch st and ash st.

he must remember that things dont
change for the good much at this
time of year.

the gentrified saints have all
moved north, to sit in hipster
bistros and drink organic
sumatra fair trade coffee.

down along 42nd and cypress st
little was said and less understood.

mostly train horns and mumbling,

mostly sleeping nocturnal birds
with a few leaf clogged storm drains.

nathan martin

Amnesia

where i go you cannot see or know,
because familiarity has lost its presence
or calm stature.

the letters of my name
have all come undone,
falling along with the tones of your
voice which lie broken on the floor
the pieces i do not recognize.

the meaning of colors are no longer fruitful.
the telling hours motion has stopped.

regardless has become my home.
the sanctuaries of my desire having
passed before me forgotten.

nathan martin

Angry Portland Vegans

they are green anarchist who listen
to national public radio along with
pseudo punk rock chick bands.

they are angry and i am pretty
sure they killed jesus.

they have names like ryan and ashley
and in the fourth grade they kicked me
in the nuts and left me on the ground
at recess.

these angry vegans also like to chew
on organic vanilla granola they buy
at the local new seasons store.

going outside afterwards to
chain smoke and give me
dirty looks.

nathan martin

Anthropologist From Manitoba

burn the eyeglass for a remedy.

knowing now that the leaves
have killed before.

science tells him that it will
be a late spring.

nathan martin

Apart From The Decay

an old shed leans crookedly in the tall grass.
a door is lifted and opened.

like a worn vinyl record to the needle rusty hinges
snap and crackle as they turn.

between slight variations in tone metallic
yesterdays speak through hinged lips.

i am apart from the decay they say.

now little is inside except some dust with a
few oddities scattered around.

a dented paint can that had been knocked over,
the paint lying on the floor in a dry puddle.

splintered out in ornate pattern it reflects in
sort of a greenish blue color.

it seems so innocent and pure for its surroundings.

the paint speaks through its flat chipped throat lowly.

i am apart from the decay it says.

nathan martin

April In Paris

from paris martin

To my wife - 2/1/88 written from my dad to my mom..

I in you and you in me laying on the sand;
I dream of multi-colored many-fanged cloud dragons
you dream of sea-shell-angles.
I offer you two multi-colored many-fanged cloud dragons
for a dozen sea-shell-angles- you decline,
and so goes the day with I in you and you in me laying on the sand.

I in you and you in me walking on the beach;
I look at the ocean, the sky- the woman in the orange sweater,
and try to place them end on end in pompous verbal anomaly.
You look at sea-shell-angles.
I offer you two sparking anomalies for a dozen sea-shell-angles-
you decline, and so goes the day with I in you and you in me
walking on the beach.

I in you and you in me walking in the snow;
I say flitter you say flutter and away I go.
I return- you offer me two apologies for one peace-
I decline, and so goes the day with I in you and you in me
walking in the snow.

I in you and you in me laying in the night;
I look to you as you turn to me
and place the warmth of your body close to mine,
then complete I know-that if the I in you were not in me
my love would be half a circle.

nathan martin

Backyard

it may be the other side that vanishes
first.

standing in the back yard smoking a
cigarette.

a car passes by first the engine then the
lights.

the faint hum of deisel and carbon are
left.

so i exhale once more.

should i speak of memories?

the clouds passing overhead.

i remember all those early fall days
the leaves having brought themselves
down to their knees.

what comes next the hip or thigh,
possibly the wrist?

shall i speak of winters joints?

that leaky fossil that sheds
half its sinews continually.

such a beautiful arched ceiling,
with heavy rain soaked lungs.

now i am as a cistern in carthage
kept in remembrance by very cold ancient
stones overhead.

i cannot speak by i may listen.

it is the vapor as i exhale that
dissapears last.

nathan martin

Bible Belt Ballad

midwest housewives decorated in flowering
curtain shades move from one corner to
the next singing in thier pine boxes.

and sunday school children with proud
names like james and john turn the suns
violent rays into grassy sermons.

for corn silo prophets who wear faded
blue jeans fo preach over a.m. tuned
radios on green and brown tractors.

while in the kitchen the leaven in the
oven is still rising so the children
must walk softly,

chasing imaginary crickets over old
creeky floorboards hear how they sing.

nathan martin

Biblical Audiology

prophetic verses set like smooth stones
past the camels dry chiseled steps.

next to a parable and a jawbone.
the dead sea testamental tongues
leaflike water the valley of acacia
transposing thier verbal vernacular.

the oral traditions passed down
by the giver of ghost
and imprinted on the skull
bones of martyred saints.

down where bone becomes papris,
the course stones shed thier skin.

and under the fingernails of an old
god the fossils prophesy.

yes the dry bones prophesy...

speaking in ancient acrostic constructs,
verse by verse their biblical audiologies
unfold in an east wind.

nathan martin

Billboards

a less than perfect messiah talks a
little nonsense out the side of his mouth.

' i was chosen at the wrong time'

or so the sunburst washed sign read.

thin and so very tall the prophets of
propaganda walk through the city with
legs of aluminum and mouths of paper.

nathan martin

Black & White Portraits

A flicker of the lens, a shutter in a box
and light becomes storyteller
shadow becomes shaman.

enameled faces held
fastened in a 5x8 frame
fill the pages of albums, the
carbon copied souls are kept like
dried leaves pressed and flattened.

they germinate through the years,
growing in wisdom, the inanimate vapors
yielding such a happy set of ghost.

while black ink corrosively set
upon phosphorus turns in it's elements
speaking in still life a thousand words.

nathan martin

Black Coffee Country

Pencil character sketches drawn on napkins,
greasy finger prints on doorhandles.
with the smell of diesel
in the vest of the stations attendant,
he moves in short quick motions
communicating with his hands.

while over at pump three
the silhouette of a large truck driver
clumsily and irreverent slips through
the cold night air muttering something
about the freightline gravel snow packs up north.

his mile marked memory worn thin
like his wallet he pulls out
to pay for the coffee
or arsenic, cup o joe, black jonny....

as off in the distance juan valdez
slowly moves along the highways
shoulder just outside of the lengthy
headlights pallid grasp,
pale as a ghost.... his mule speaking fluent japanese.

nathan martin

Body Language

the punctuation of your face
is all to telling.
the lifted eyebrows held as hyphens
the dropped tongue coma..
the misplaced earlobed parenthesis

collums from round your throat form
the strangely pronouced emotion.

the semicolon half grin creates
a harbor for vessels in the viens
to carry strait to the heart the
formless expressions.

the joy of seeing you smile
illimuminates me.
and the silence between
us grows beautiful once more.

nathan martin

Bourbon Steelhead

tempered steelheads migrating through the shallows, thier metallic scales lubricated with penzoil two stroke motor oil.

moving over sand and rocks
some gray, some brown,
some smooth, some jagged and torn.

with alloys glissening in the summer heat
they brush up against the rivers stones to break off the fishermens disappointment.

all those scarred gums whose fishhooked lines caused thier lead bellies to rust.

in the muddy waters they stir,
drink to much whiskey and sink to the river bars sandy bottom.

thier rigid frames drifting through the sediment,
with heads lowered swaying
slowly like submariner zeppelins, trying to navigate against the turbulent waters.

now these mechanical nomadic sailors keep for themselves a tin compass in the sky filled with memories of home.

but still they are mellow preachers
rolling and tumbling in thier hardened elements trying to find thier way.

nathan martin

Breakfast

spin the daylight dizzy on down and if not
then pour it out.

filling the black bean morning cups
up in the early hours.

the liquid expanse of an eyelid glows
in kitchen.

a slight slender dawn lifts the tile roof
and warmth is reason and time is holy.

better not rush there is plenty of that for later,
time that is.

it is early and the clock has not unwound its figure.
however the birds in the trees are hungover from too many figs.

listen to them howl and moan poor drunk b@#\$%s.

nathan martin

Burmese Scarcrow

synthetic textile ghost, a.k.a. brown burlap bag
hanging over a shovel in the garden.

along its side reads burmese long grain rice.

it is raining heavily and the water has begun
to create tiny puddles in the dirt..

i can hear the wind blowing sheats
of rain across the grass.

i imagine green rice fields and wooden
ox carts mixing in the monsoon clay ethic.

burmese burlap hanging in the wind,
from what fields have you come?

who painted those markings on you?

was your birthplace holy?

the pool of bethseda is at your feet.

nathan martin

Charles Bukowski And The Emo-Girl

in the back of the bus they sit awkwardly across from each other. the smell of pabst and pall mall cigarettes magnetically repels against strawberry revlon lipgloss and hairspray. he is trying not to hear her headphones blaring fergy and she is trying not to notice the stains on his shirt. he is thinking of neon exit signs and fishnet stockings on roominghouse madrigals who walk gently in the street under the red lights like cranes on a concrete pond.

she wants more watermelon flavored chewing gum and to write endless pages about vanishing teddybear boyfriends and fluffy heart shaped clouds.

the bus driver looks in her mirror at the pair and instantly thinks of rust on tinfoil. after that the bus pulls slowly to the next stop at the community library, charles crookedly raises from his seat and disappears into the night... the end..

'it takes more than time to live to long' bukowski

nathan martin

Charter Oak Church

he in his elegant black sits in the corner

will he touch... tread.. lightly between the rows
of the american gothic families

their drawn out figures seem to fasten
throughout the lengthy periods of the sanctuaries silence.

that same silence forged in the dusty seminaries
of luthern chapels keeps him sitting so very still
with folded hands and a hymnal upon his knee.

will he stoop.. pray... recall the years.
or count the pews that seem to separate
him from the rest of the flock.

perhaps someone should give
him some bread half to remember
and half to forget.

now the interpretation of saints
and sinners dreams shines
through the stained glass
window to his right.

the scattered light comforts him
as it sifts and showers down in
shades of green and light yellow.

it moves through him slowly like
a fathers voice breaking upon the
sinews of the hardened wooden pews.

and diligence is kept and heard
as hymns are sung in the early morning.

nathan martin

Cheap Cologne

a nascar napolean quick with
a word and slow with his step.

wanders out of oscars the bar across
the freeway from my house where
cars race by like clovered bees.

they honeysuckle to a pack of camel
cigarettes mixed in with a hefty dose
of canoe cologne.

that sweet sweet bottled fragrance, draped
around the men as they wander to thier
trucks.

68 chevelle slightly lifted.

nathan martin

Chronic Hesitation

dayspot caskets introduce the introductions...

....parenthesis with nothing in between them.....

.. patterns and builders in the open fields

destroy what little was left...

... ..

..waiting for the explanation..

the reason for the hesitation....

the papal heart in the wreathed skin

of a divine second guesser.....

skips a beat.. skips a line..

forgets the need to forgive

and hardens to the touch...

nathan martin

Collective Synesis

people that collect marbles also
collect like terms. these people
may collect unemployment in
florida as well. sitting out in thier
front yards they collect memories
to store in thier pockets, as they
converse and philosophize with
plastic pink flamingos.

people that collect english dining
ware also collect dust. thier collective
unconscious has forgotten paradise.
they have all left eden to watch the
antique roadshow in minneapolis.

people that collect swiss watches
also collect minutes and seconds.
thier angels move in oyster perpetual
motion collecting prayers.

nathan martin

Consuming Silence

forget your question mark,
you have said enough already.

smoking in between complex gestures.

forget your gestures.

i feel better about things that way.

left open and silent that is....

there is no absurdity in silence no
over indulgence of jacked up
quietion marked innuendo's.

i dont think i like the word innuendo,
it makes me think of phychiatrist in turtlenecks.

i need to forget about phyciatrist in turtlenecks
sitting with thier leggs crossed like double
edged question marks.

i think there are cheap prints of claude
monet on the wall.

i need to forget about the cheap claude monet
prints and rooms filled with innuendo's.

perhaps i could swallow them like when i was
child playing with my chef boyardee soup the
letters floating around in swirls.

lucky for me i have a word like silence that is
canabilistic silence consumes innuendo's
and turtlenecked phychiatrist.

silence consumes everything if you are patient enough.

nathan martin

Contemporary Poets

i read the others, ginsberg, kerouac,
and burroughs.

i dont want to be like them lewdly cynical,
immorally impowered by a shelf full of
hardbound paper and dust.

undrawing their livingroom curtains,
standing in the middle of the room
half naked wearing toga's and
turtlenecks.

frail f-ing bas-ds with oversized heads.
pretending to be like whitman, or frost.

at least bukowski had the decency not to
even try to keep an intellectual toga over himself.

he just stood there in his trashy motel room with
mismatched carpet and cheap velvet
paintings on the wall.

flicking his cigarette into his ashtray and
thinking about what it is like to be a fly on
the wall and how much he does not like
all the other contemporary poets.

nathan martin

Corners In The Attic

a wishbucket painting of a midwest
sky in the evening.

an old rusty singlespeed scwinn bicycle.

folded mothball memories stacked
in cardboard.

and you can pass down three generations
in an A-framed wonderment.

lost to all but not to dust, where spiders play
keeper of all still keepsakes.

thier hollow formed webs catch
dreams in the night.

nathan martin

Count Dracula

far beneath the steeples of cobble stoned london,
he moves without the parting of a shadows grace.
from morning to morning he carries no longing.

under the heavy hymns of the luthern organs
he breaths amongst centuries of dead and
thoughtful saints

he can see thier forms in the darkened hour,
thier drawn out robes crested and wrinkled.
the emblems of holy words dust covered and faded.

now once again he must part the letters
in tombs of mortered regret.

ressurrection of the coffin figure to wander and speak
to whom he may, walking through herb gardens.

carried by tombstone... gravestone october winds,
which blow hollowly causing his morbid child to flee,
all those memories of her.

now he must refrain from the glow of the brass
lanterns and pale jugulars his clavicle redemption.

as through the arterial streets of london the
bloodless form of his opaque continence
mourns and is drained of all mineral columns.

nathan martin

Couple Of Strange Lines

i lied when i was lying
and i walked where i was walking.

i lived when i was living
and i died when i was dying

i slept when i was sleeping
and i dreamt when i was dreaming.

i lost when i was losing
and i knelt when i was kneeling.

i drank when i was drinking
and i fell and kept on falling.

i was holy but never holier
i was strange but never a stranger.

nathan martin

Couple Strange Lines

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nathan martin

Crescent Garden

stone pathed verses drain
the tails of lilacs laying winterly.

somekind of angelic resin
leaks down through the wrist

with a handful of crescent
moons i scatter my yesterdays.

as i walk through the veiled terrace of
twilight stalks my crescent silhouete
shifts and lengthens.

and the blood amongst
the withering lylacs

and the blood amongst the iris.

somehow seems to turn all of my grey
ash's into some meaning.

nathan martin

Crickets

big rain little booted buddha
hopping in a monsoon knapsack.

a mural pasture filled with green
slender stalks lean in rows.

children are playing in between the spaces
dark skinned and vibrant.

they wear snorkels around there heads
and breath aqua marine.

bent labor can wait since the trees have all grown
into archaic reefs.

now the rain descends suicidally transparent
in the unshethed wind.

only the crickets have paused and grown silent.

nathan martin

Curbside Dali

Sitting under the lamplight at midnight,
I break the mortared silence with the strike of a match.

I have a pocket full of camels and a sky filled with
large elephant like raindrops which fall slowly through
an asylum of orange lamplight resting over me.

i watch them descend downward to walk about me
crooked and cumbersome,
like some Dali portrait upon the pavement.

they breath and pause for a moment to
stoop in their long legged prose.
gathering to reflect in a puddle on the corner,
by someones words i had heard earlier that morning.

In the leaves i will put them i think.
Maybe the passing wind will do me this favor
and carry them off, leaving no sense of direction or guilt.

but like a good subject i sit very still for my portrait.
to sail with lock and key through the shadowy
chambers of solitude, waiting their holding
night by the wrist I sit curbside.

nathan martin

Damp Paperbacks

nickleplated head full as a jar left
out in the rain.

old novel with the author you
cant quite remember.

we can worry later about it
just like in the old days.

tealeaf stimuli is twice as light in the city.

the somewhat unfriendly cat in the
bookstore on the corner seems disinterested.

watching a woman on the sidewalk
holding a wet paper grocery bag.

her arms wrapped around the bottom,
its falling apart and the sun is counting
backwards.

it will be dark soon.

we are falling apart and talking about heading
south into the high desert.

we pass the time by reading paperbacks that have
been soaked in mineral oil for days and
hardened under the sun.

we wear heavy sweaters purchased at
thrift stores, the faint smell of mothballs
still lingering on the thick threads.

the cat has taken an interest in
your side pocket pulling with its claws and mouth.

soon the rain will cough up the paperbacks as well,
everything will change.

nathan martin

Dead Man Walking/ Inner Shelter

key rattle, chain rattle, a keychain rattles
hanging from my pocket, it sways back
and forth as i walk keeping time.

keeping the metronome and sundial
disk near to me, nearer to me still is
my life so precious to me.

key rattle, chain rattle, a keychain
rattles half hidden half slanting..
falling..descending.. calling.

this way and that it sways igniting under
the burning disk.

starting engines within, starting cyclones
of hardened gravity without that pull with
cement fingers at my shadow and
grasp at my skin.

crumbling sidewalks, wrinkled skin that cannot
repel the infinite blows of this solar suicidal verse.

now veins seperate the blood on this vine of mine,
traveling down into the aged cellar.

where the timeless sinews of the heart
shelter every visiting creation.

nathan martin

Deconstructed Cabbage Rolls Aka Cabbath Rollica

obviously the whole of humanity and creation
can be summed up in the deconstruction of
the cabbage roll.

not surprisingly the cabbage roll once unrolled
has a plethora of wisdom and solidarity.

this comes from its unique construction of ingredients,
which include but are not limited to...

the linguistics and musical preferences of sperm whales.
the neo-gothic american wisdom of the dustbowl.

the correct interpretation of the communist manifesto.
the transcendent conscious nature of the otta porcupine.

the unamaginally critical fashion connoisseur-sense
of macho man randy savage.

a manual of the appropriate way to pre-set a late 80's
zenith videocassette recorder.

of course the proper pronociation and etymology
of the early latin cabbage roll 'cabbath rollica'.

now im not a conspiracy theorist but when the cameras were
not rolling i always knew martha stewart was leaving something
out and julia childs was just plain hiding something.

nathan martin

Delta Park

playing soccer getting kicked
in the shins by somebody named
juan, talking sh*t afterwards.
carrying a little bravado in my
93 subaru impreza

, as we pull into the parking lot
of the chinese american dive bar
called mings
drink and fill up on msg
talk more sh*t,

but its all over now
my delta park days put on the shelf
like on old chuck norris video.

nathan martin

Desert Ride

a broken bottled oasis flashes in the distance.

bent waves of light whether the skies
burnt skin.

a desert revival whose chapeled
steps are cindered bones.

a highway mirage signals its phantom
spirit to mirror barren beauty.

shed the skin, turn the throttle
speeding faster by to leave no trace.

slant mouthed informal follower.

whispers in canyons and red rock hollows,
echos in between the spaces of staggering
footprints.

parched tongue ravens bleached black
feathers lift and carry from wire to wire
the news of the iron horse.

reflective tape along the side of the road
turns the vascular gravel roads into
beautiful waysides.

markered movement in the evening
flying by with the cactus and the sage.

the vast skies retinas dilate and expand
and i am dry but i am not sick says the air.

breathing downshifting, speeding so fast
heading south but never down.

nathan martin

Detoxing From Ethyl

no soap, no ethyl for my skin.

no hangovers left to form my
bottled innocense

may god keep my inner saint
whole so that i may no longer
need to scrub and scour my skin.

may the lord keep me from chaptering
my signatures of sorrow at noonday.

now that all my ethyl gods have evaporated.
i judge all clutter with a sterile sobriety.

i take their hollow sinews to the recycling bin,
tossing them in a pile they clank and clutter
loudly.

i think its time for another aspirin.

nathan martin

Dichotomy

I could not tell the two of you apart.
even when i tried to squint you just
grew narrower

and these words are slender stalks in a field
seamless yet sperate, unrhyming yet punctuated.

i remember sitting in the kitchen with poor
posture misspelling the word absence.

you collected a few of the absract moments
to form are binary convoluted past personages.

who spoke in the third person and misdiagnosed
the moments before leaving only shades of
gray pathologies for us to follow.

niether light nor dark.

i tried to gather a little from the two of you
to trace an opinioned outline of you on
some paper, but the opinions fell down.

so i used instead a magnet off of your refrigerator.

you said something like..... what are you doing
or i think im thirsty.

a half empty half full glass sits on the
counter across the room.

nathan martin

Diesel Combustive Mantra

diesel atomic guides furiously drive
themselves into one another.

suicidal dispensation..

a violent oratory of flaming pistons
spin and burn their manifold blessings
faster and faster.

under penzoil annoitings they
ressurrect the metallic fossil
fueled fist..

second son of the industrial ethic.

plums of black smoke in the
lower districts chokes back and
passes down the sins of the fathers.

emission... omission..
strait and narrow is the way...

glow plugs light the elemental
skeletons, carbon combust
where no sun shines.

nathan martin

Dishonest Abe The Referee

he's honest so honest until you hand
him a whistle.

he's tall with a old styled puritanical
brown beard trimmed neatly to look
like abe lincoln, and he wears a blank
and white striped shirt.

he's dishonest abe the referee
and he will call you for sh**t that
you never did.

he's dishonest abe and he is convinced
that all men are created equal.
unless your are a tall red headed defender
then he will run around all over the field
hasseling you with his black whistle hanging
out the side of his mouth.....
and he's dishonest he's dishonest abe the referee.

nathan martin

Dream

rapid eye incubus dissipates into ether,
nothing in stone left to remember.

nathan martin

Dry Cans And Mason Jars

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dry cans in cellars full of sweet fruit,
covered in dust are beautiful in a way.

all with labels peeling, the iconic cambells
soup cans in tarnished red and white
set like rusty bells on a church steeple.

not like the empty mason jars on the front porch
half filled with rain half with childhood memories
of grasshopper guest and fire fly delights.

nathan martin

Dry-Erase Seizure

expositions, preminitions
dry-erasers falling from the sky.

but I've got a chalkboard for a
raincoat and a half dozen reasons
to change my expression.

expositions, dry expressions,
clay cast methods i formed long
ago.

long before my epileptic discourse
unraveled and convulsed beautifully
off of my tongue.

sitting in the corner shaking violently
at the wrist. slumping at a computer
writing poetry with a pocket full of
felt tipped markers.

watching the clock turn slowly
at night shift in a breakroom.

stealing away to heaven in a fit
under the hum of some ballis
lights.

nathan martin

Enough Enough Not Enough

Enough enough not enough
reason in the conversation
the angry tones cluttering
up in his neck
he clears his throat
to get to the point.
put pen to paper to stain white
sheets, maybe she will forgive him.

Enough enough not enough
clothes over skin when she turned
cold. her rock garden arguments
placed along the ridge of her
spine so to not forget.
so few the botanical notes
in her morning tea.

Enough enough not enough
where short glances fail they
cannot see but stumble over
their words they fall and break
like a shell inwardly with the
heavy yoke placed upon
stove top, table top
they will have to decide
where to put the the plates.

nathan martin

Everything Under The Sun

Ecclesiastical Version

kidney stone children out from god
passing through blood and blindfolded
angels.

Passing on the left with turn signals
flashing. Heading further north past the
the rock of gibraltar foaming at the mouth.

Past a lighthouse with two poorly dressed
custodians who drive Chrysler lebarons
and hand out brochers.

But these people are tired of brochers
filled with empty promises and lurid
excitements.

They need manna from heaven and
Hebrew national corn dogs.

now im pretty sure there is a proverb
in the headlights of a 92 corolla which
passes by impregnated robotic dragon
flies.

they are reminded of the sun dried
opaque
exo-skeletal bugs lying along the back of
the rear window.

somehow they seem more motionless and
beautifully tranquil than before.

but there is nothing more to be said
nothing more to be seen here under the
sun.

nathan martin

Evil Wind Chimes

crooked fingered me in my
ichabod crane slippers,
peering out the front porch.
watching a pair of hollow wind
chimes rattle.

the wintery touch of window panes
offer little but the frail figures of the
stars hanging like lanterns or
distant resevoirs of salt,
causing me to grow very silent.

miner of that somber place,
solice to that artic light.

like a blind albatross i wander,
and the canvas of my eyes seems
to reflect this solemn procession.

where once a moon hung in december
the last of the october and november
leaf like, pale like whispers across
the shadowy face.

tell me of what signs should be or
that may come, this evil wind chimes.

nathan martin

Exact Paper Portraits

stacked certificates of printed births,
ink stamped little feet on four by eight cards.

such near relatives returning annually to
the hallmark isle to get a little less specific.

a funny card, a sad card,
a card for a hand shake
and a card for the holidays.

printed and chopped up to mix
a little emotion in with the paper.

selling handshakes and hugs, the smell
of her hair and the familiar tones of his voice.

paper and ink create the space to part
the old from the young.

some full of color some aged in black and white.

but there were some who were far past their stick figured
golden crayon bethel's.

there were some that no colors could describe,
no images resemble.

there were some that were exact paper portraits.

theirs is only an ink footprint and a story,
a wrinkled face without an ornate border
and they are very rare collected
by a very old god.

nathan martin

Fabric Stranger

now the angles of the room seem
pulled together by chance and little else.

you lieing on the floor still as can be.

happy head full of bee pollen
crossed with a linen ciggerette.

your smile is unique.

your fabric skin is course not
smooth like the others.

perhaps you are a lantern.

your hands are wrinkeled.

where have they been for so long,
in a bathtub or a laudrymat?

your niether clean nor dirty.

what is that strange auburn glow
about your eyes?

perhaps you are a ghost,
but where is your gown?

you seem to be holding some kind
of tacit knowledge.

perhaps you are from my past.

it was in that moment that i saw your face.

dead love on the floor wrinkeled in the corner
the shirts piled up in a mess.

thats where i remember you from.

nathan martin

Flight Of Quetzalcoatl

stones in the heavens which do not migrate
but crumble down to the earth.

cortez crumbling...crumbling futher down.

playing dice on the street corner with all
the other half shaded stone icons.

mother mary in the summer heat
melts in a red dress of wax across
the square cobbled plaza..

her head lifted up looking up into the sky.

quiker than a soul flight burning radon red,
the plumed serpent god flies over tin
metal and cardboard canopies.

with his passport in his back pocket he heads
north searching for a little luck.

i saw him once you know, he was standing
very still on one leg in a small garden
outside a trailor park in woodland washington.

he came in the year of an el-nino and landed
next to a two-tone painted parked el camino.

the sun glissened off of the two of them
in a fantastic brilliance.

return of the dorsoflexion criss crossed sun.
return of the meso-mythic pinnacle..

nathan martin

Flight Of The Hindenburg

hydrogen speckled pair of eyeglasses,
watching from a distance.

high.. high above the weather vain.

chance of rain, chance of windowpane...elegance.

slim chance of hindenberge smoldering,
the embers falling down in ethereal glory.

wheels and wings of the cherubim burning,
falling all around.

that must have been what it felt like
to be an icon.

in that moment luck should have it
the wind shifted.

second year of la nina and
the fire fly zeppelin breathes
into the open field.

nathan martin

Forgiveness

light a candle in a steel chamber,
press back the hardened touch.

learn to forgive.

impartation of light and favor to
the the heavy blackened yoke..

i healed some by the wayside
and kept on walking, i moved
along in a single breath.

now brightened days lengthen the cords
and renew the sinews between
the nerves and there is healing
when i learn to forget.

old time blessed assurance,
redemption between two stretched
out palms, no safer place to be..

nathan martin

Formica

Lunatic tile underneath a formica god.

he cracks at the edges.

synthetic delirium..

coptic nerve....

in his head plastic can be holy

.in his head

he bends but never breaks

nathan martin

Freeze Dried

it is the atomic weight of it that matters most.

violent barbiturate tongues empty coffee cups
and deliver the insight.

before there was religion there
was foldgers dry roast.

before the lunar landing there
was instant oatmeal.

still my tongue is heavy with saliva.

i shall not lie.

it is the form that matters least.

the patient deconstruction of all
unsound perspectives.

bright and ultra bright scientific
notations fell from heaven like lightening.

the witnesses annotated cauterized edges
and spoke in the most literal sense.

before there was a mother there
was a mosaic womb.

before there was a helix faith
there was a clay parable.

still the pencil aches in the
palm of my hand.

i shall not murder.

it is the face of the masses that matters most.

catching low tide shells in between shallow moons.

fringed hands count down the gene pool legend,
seperated only by accented lips.

before there was a cleric in a robe
there was a tilt in the axis.

before there was a fat bellied fertility goddess
there was a splinter in a finger.

still my stomach is full of acrid
compound naratives.

i shall not want.

nathan martin

Front Porch

i could not find muscle in your milk
so i starved until i found out that
bread was just as good.

i could not hide a moth in a whisper,
so i learned to speak loudly and through
things across the livingroom.

i could not wait for tomorrow so
i filled my pockets with yesterdays
and grew gray daiseys in my front yard.

gray from birth they say, so very very
wrinkled and gray.

but you should see them at night
how they glissen in the grass.

when all the nocturnal threads have been
counted the moths come out and gather
round my front porch.

flying closer and closer to that celestial flame.

illuminated by a seventy five wattt bulb fastened
crookedly just above my door.

nathan martin

Gardening

your face polaroid happy glowing not half so distant.

walking over to grab the shovel and rain filled
bucket near the gravel driveway.

i watch your hands digging quickly
pouring seeds out as you go.

we bury them together, in rows just like the way
my mother used to.

infant tie..... tile back to the time we heard all those
simple things. when we played in the dirt and grew simple
things like arms and legs, eventually even a mouth.

but first came the eyes yours seem brighter
than usual today.

now we rush to bury the rhubarb and the turnup's
next to the south side of the house where you
planted the carrots the year before.

it is foggy outside and the ground is cold.

your hands are muddy with the dark soil and you
are talking about how you used to go to this
abandoned armory along a sandy grass filled
jetty near the tip of the puget sound.

you said it was a safe place for you and
that it was always foggy just like this morning.

you look up at me with a look that makes me
feel very still and introspective.

i wonder am i that armory for you now?

can i be that body of metal and cement

not cold but alive.

can i regrow simple things, simple arms
and legs that care for you.

is it too late to bury a little hope at this time of year?

rebar ribs crack to the touch.
i take a deep breath in and look
over at the back yard.

nathan martin

Glorious Grotesque Guggenheim

walking.. walking..

extremities all together now in motion.

until there it was in front of me a
used condom just lying there.

it was next to several leaves and a yellow
and white line running
down the street.

the yellow line was sort of a burnt yellow
and crumbling slightly.

the symetries seemed to be broken in the
filth yet somehow remained whole and preserved.

snap the picture.
snap the picture

maybe the guggenheim might want this catalagued.

i threw down some of the vietnamese ramen noodles
i was eating out of a plastic container... snap the picture.

i threw down the container.
snap the picture.

i vomited on the sidewalk and wrote
bob dylan lyrics next to it.
snap the picture.

i threw myself down.
snap the selfie picture.

i got up feeling dirty and hungry.

i dont think i am ment to be an artist.

nathan martin

Graffiti Prayers

iconoclastic, aortic valves..

toppling through stone nerves
seperate the steel brow, the cement tongue
and holy mother from her child.

yet still the public squares give birth,
doing a little more with the willing.

see the skinny ones wander.

all those holy incarnate youth who highlight
the shadows at night with their dark hooded coats.

some have pockets filled with tin saviors,
some condoms and some ciggerett's.

shake, shake, spray and shake.

robotic graffiti filled fist poured out like liquid
prayers forgives a few of the more common spaces.

ugly bertha with her iron curtain veiled about
her spray painted in rich angelic colors refuses
to remain silent any longer.

unvielling her aged face, revelling the gray mortered
lines who crippeled so many.

ugly stomped out bertha crumbling naked into every public square,
cry's a little from her unsentimental paved skin.

all those sterile cinderblocks baptised and forgiven
with the rattle of a tin can.

tagged and made holy under the lamplights with shades of
citron and bright orange.

nathan martin

Gravel Road

scattered rocks crackling under a '76
chevy truck, cumbersom rusty and dented.
scattered thoughts of a small child.

he peers out the bedroom window..
a pair of headlights dance over shadows
of trees and mudpuddles.

that same rusty old harbinger of anger coming
closer and closer to him carried by steel
and gravel, how he hates the sound of it.

dark hair.. alcohol... violence and fear
are all called father to him.

you know he has an impediment they
say just listen to those unsequential
consonants and that dirty face.

dope and booze are waiting futher
down the road at the end on the left
hand second hand side..

nathan martin

Grey Bear

</>

i used to have a grey bear that i sat on as a chair.
he was made of metal and had four rusty legs.

but he was so good natured waiting for me on the back
porch just to the left of the ashtray and recycling bin.

how i would just sit there on that old
bent gray chair that i called bear.

drinking deschutes brewery dry and
eating expensive cheese.

grey bear was always such a good listener to,
not like that squirrel that would always run
off at first sight of me.

nathan martin

H2o Bottles

kind of straight forward is always crooked.

hurry up and get to the point.

sinai water in the desert poured out freely,
better hurry up, better lap it up.

just remember bottled water sounds
better in french.

taste better with painted cumulus
fluffy clouds on the wrapper.

old hebrew corndogs sold down the street
at the seven eleven are two for a dollar.

better get in line and throw in a six
pack of olympia dry.

just remember sometimes crooked is never straight.

driving with one hand on the wheel the other
searching along the floorboard.

the clank of clutter when the words pile up.

nathan martin

Hand Me Downs

hand them down, pass them down,
coins clanking into the bottom of the
offering tin basket.

recite them now all those dark brown covered
hymnal words.

turning page after page
over to number 346 singing aloud,

'happy is the man whose cautious feet'.

now spell them out and write them down
all those verses that stick to the bone.

pass them down, hand them down
the crumbs from the lords table.

carried from pew to pew by a deacon
named Al who smells of old spice cologne.

remember him now standing so tall,
with a happy expression handing pamphlets
down always from the center left isle.

me sitting there swinging my feet several
inches from the long green carpet.

wearing hand me down pants with pockets
full of sugar cubes i had snuck out to
get from the lobby.

nathan martin

Happy Place

paper mache boat's of noah's ark
made in sunday school,
imperfectly sailing gripped
by little fingers.

two of every kind of happyness,
the joy of childhood innocence
returning to me with dove
and olive branch.

nathan martin

Hibernian Flowers

the fossilized hibernian wild flowers
are very still but do not shudder
under the soils hardened shroud.

the mist buried long ago its
sullen regret. forgotten by the hills
and mountains it rest in the basins.

where the lilies gather in the morning.
the shamrock leprechaun's dance over
thier own graves, happy as can be.

nathan martin

Holy Relic

when once my clay hands began to harden
under the potters wheeled sun
i turned to reach for my shadow
but found only a basket of dried
yesterdays and tomorrows.

when once my clay feet began to harden
through quarries of stone and silt,
impermeable to all water but not to ink.
i decorated myself with a stylus in a
tattoo shop on st johns and 49th st.

when once my clay head began to harden
kilns and flames were all servants to
my thoughts and my porcelain pupils
brought light to all like a holy relic.

nathan martin

Hungover

a little light in the blind eye searches for the illusion.

grain alcohol filled apparitions stumble through the cornea
seeking asylum from the light of day.

myopic lord dont look down on me just yet.

cause there is no chance to forget now my
birthplace a moment ago.

thin thin gravity round my head.

a little darkness in a pair of sunglasses
blinds my eye, tints the orange hew.

missing involitute, indiscrepant past,
each wander into their own corner
before the color can be deciphered.

nathan martin

'T'

salt can bleed the heart
out of its natural helium state.

in the meantime i will age gradually.

i am in need of scripture and multivitamins.

single syllable i sitting on the couch
drinking tap water from a masson jar.

monotheistic i body..

three parts water one part salt.

nathan martin

Inanimate Praise

cold has no time, motion has no voice

and it has been so long since the stones
cried out in the open fields. hardened
still cold stones whose only reflection is
to bruise all flesh.

now i do not believe these hands that move
before me. i cannot consider the vulgarity
that comes through my wrist or lips in any
given moment.

so many these incomplete comparisons that
cause me to sail my wooden hummingbird
arms and legs through the air wildly.

now i forsake my simpler self to observe the
ripples in air that seperate the truth
from lies.

perhaps it is motion that is the deciever
and stillness is the only truth.

all things return to the earth from where
they came and the sabbath never moves
except for maybe in the house of the lord.

where the beauty of the lords holyness
is shown with the uplifting of finger printed
palms.

yet even now how still this oak pew remains
beneath me, revealing all truth in its calm
four legged reverance.

nathan martin

Indirect Characters

i saw them on the streets in downtown
portland the other day they each wore
pieces of someone elses expressions.

some of them were tall like the clouds
seem in the morning when you first look up.

others looked different maybe more like
me or less like you. some wore mirrors over
their eyes, and when they spoke it sometimes
sounded like yagasaki moriah todoi.

the words would bounce off of the pavement
like scattered scrabble pieces. i would pick up
one then another as i turned my head.

i became very proficient at wandering and
collecting all things ungiven out of the corners
of my eyes. third person twice removed we
all watched each other.

nathan martin

Indirect Light

it resides in the southern side of houses
that are filled with cacti and other succulents.

it reflects in between chagal moons
and smoldering cigarette butts.

i saw it once under a lamp along the
roadway just after it rained near cheklov
and 12th st, it was so surreal and beautiful.

nathan martin

Inside The Lines 'Portland Coffee House'

waiting in line.. in step...
in monotones.. in midevening.

waiting for a cup of coffee
from a nihilist barista.

while outside it is raining..

outside the clouds float by in
gray shades of indifference

outside a few pigeons cheat the
sidewalks mortared lines.

yet inside the lines of my skin is
more than water.

waiting in line.. in step...
in monotones for
my caffiene osmosis.

turning to the right slightly to mix
a little of octobers cloudy reason
with some powdered vanilla in
my cup of coffee.

the radio overhead is tuned to npr

it is a man and a woman talking about
dandelions and the dwindling mountian
goat population.

i think they are wearing sweaters
but i will never really know

nathan martin

James Hetfield Buying Soymilk

you may think that soy is not made of metal
but i saw james hetfield filling his kettle.

full of that sh\$% in the vegan isle.
so i just starred at him for awhile.

nathan martin

Lake Baikal

underground governmental labs extract organs,
neon blood drips slowly to the concrete floor.
organic roots sprout growing through the cracks..
decorated bright magnets shake the instruments
of surgical precision.

duct taped mouths whisper out of slanted lips,
pass the scalpel, incision, cut, slice. wounds
heal instantly.

textured nitrile exam gloves tighten and are
placed on sentient being's, expressions fall.
skin once cold begins to thaw.
carbon and water separate, photosynthetic
membranes send electric pulses causing
condensation to drip up to the ceiling.
plant like derivatives pass prophetic codes,
biochemically changing their genetic disposition.
mineral deposits gather in the corner.

while aqueducts in siberia drain slowly into lake baikal,
energy seeking amber spheres float through the
murky water.
now a tall creature rises off of the lead surgical table.
and shapeshifts moving positive metallic-ions
around the room.

negative space holds itself abstract and still.

astrobiological chemist stagger back
breathing heavily through thier mask.

english teachers decide where to place
the emphasis, comma's become apostrophe's
and periods dark nebulas.

the equinoxes procession stimulates retinas to dilate.
molecular iodized salt is thrown over the
shoulders of superstitious catholic priest
falling to the ground and becoming holy.

nathan martin

Lego Cities

square blocked infrastructures formed from a meddling mind.
engineered and fused together with stricky grape popsicle fingers.
the lego babylon rises with its hanging gardens
strewn along the carpet floor.

a mesopotamien oasis of multi colored plastic stuctures.
carelessly scattered around for archeologist to
decipher. all those strange cuniform residues of fingerprints
left by the sugar filled diety who set them in place.

catylist of that industrial architect whose
cubicle fortress of a daydreaming metropolis.
sits in the corner of the living room awaiting
its devastation from future gods armed
with vacumes and cleanup times.

nathan martin

Les Pugilist

there is this bar i went to once up north
it is called les pugilist.

it is a canadian dive bar somewhere
in the western province of quebec.

the parking lot is filled with large trucks
wandering in like steel framed geese.
thier drivers touch down awkwardly on
cracked vinyl barstools.

they eat truffels and curse!
waterboarding themselves with pitchers
of labbat blue and listening to french versions
of willie nelsons pancho and lefty.

at times thier vision blures and the criss
cross patterns of thier matching flannels
enrage each other.

the only solice they have is a cigerrette
machine over by the window that does
not vend cigerrettes but tickets to heaven
each seperatly blessed by the pope.

nathan martin

Less Of More

a little less of a little more.

a smaller me in the attic of someone
elses house.

a little futher away until i do not have
to worry about the words or the punctuation,
the notoriety of the base emotion.

the evangelical viewing of gods holy dice,
causes me to take a chance.

wandering
round the streets at night with a styrofoam
cup full of copper possibilities.

revival of the inner nautilus, want and luster
polish my penny combed voyage.

journey into the interior, finding myself
on the street at two a.m.

strange man in my clothes, unable to
shed the need to get drunk.

more or less staggering wandering,
taking a chance.

nathan martin

Little Brother Lesser Than

unreasonably thin embryonic brother

born again in a wash basin on the
third floor of a st joseph's hospital.

outside his window pale paper mache
cranes float by in mudpuddles.

he watches them a little,
he gathers joy a little,
he lifts his head a little.

little so little brother lesser than
grows beatifully bright eyed by the
window.

distracted momentarily his shadow
half hanging off of him forgets
to adorn its dark attire.

nathan martin

Lone Prairie Hymn's

aboriginal saintly crickets painted
in thier red dust bleached masquera
jump jubilently in the drygrass.

dark yellow paint chips erode away
on a lone steeple house.
they fall to the ground like scorched
pigments off of a dusty wrinkeled brow.

inside walking around on creeky floorboards
an array of bearded bright eyed bootstraped
men fellowship.

dizzied daylight creeks through an
old clanky fan on a window pane.
it harmonizes slowly with the
houses of the native holy sons
and daughters, who create an
original psalm.

nathan martin

Mary Todd's Bar

under the bay bridge in astoria there is a brick
bar with a broken seal door gnarled, tangeled and scraped.

three bare knuckled hindges of iron and a circle with strange
ingravings on it welcome the thirsty kingfisher.

whose kingdom is a bundle of yellow and white nets
tossed in the bed of a blue 84 ford pickup parked
around the back.

her the locals always park in the back and fill up
on busch beer in the can.

stacks of cardboard boxes full of empty cans line the hallway
leading to the bathroom and the backdoor.

the bar is an old solid piece of maple with countless carvings on it,
from what looks like a pocket knife or a fishhook.

scribbed and carved names like john and neil are everywhere,
but the wood looks old enough to have jonah and noah on it.

now the whole place smells of salt and whiskey,
the kind of salt thats in the air and settles in your
mouth under your tounge.

nobody know's better than mary herself, they say one day
leaning over the bar she looked over her shoulder at the
sunlight coming through the window and turned into
a pillar of salt.

of course that was years ago in the old testament and you
know how fishermen tale tall tales, especially at marys todd's.

nathan martin

Mental Notes

levels of indifference fill my brain,
and all i need is a steno note pad
and a bit more coffee.

i feel rushed now to come up with the
right phrase or clever incantation,
but why not wait for the others to
come tumbling down, the syllabols
that fill the lines of pages and phonebooks,
and for some reason we all think of
the color yellow.

now i am trying to remember the name
of that really good thai reastaurant,
but my thoughts only come across in
subtitles and seem to be in hungarian.

oh well it does not matter now that i have
run out of room on this page and my
genius has left me. he always smoked
all of my camel lights anyways.

nathan martin

Mind Of A Graffiti Artist

letters..

how many letters? 26.

well he should rearrange them as to not sound redundant
and dont forget the occasional @\$% for cursing during text.

now in his head there are many gears rusty but funtional they meter out the
letters
and create words that may even form a structure from time to time.

iron oxide filled metallic brown bullfrogs line up along the inside of his head.

synonymous with repetative laugage but they prove to be
good fishermen with poles made of wrenches
and lines anchored with decayed
bolts and strange adverbs.

sometimes the rust flakes off his toungue and
you can almost hear @\$% this not again.

but he is steadied by a cup of folgers dry
roast in a white styrofoam cup.

he is comforted by the fact that the world has
coffee filled styrofoam cups.

this world cannot get by on mere
loaves and fishes he thinks...

now the lines have become to heavy and
grandiose they are ready to....

snap..

fall apart...

come undone...

perhaps the malaria has set in again he got it from a metallic
mosquito with the head of a syringe in juarez new mexico.

in his delerium..
beside his delerium..
underneath his delerium...

he deconstructs ancient alphabets..

english..
greek...
aramaic...
phoenician
cuniform... UnTil.. aLL.. ..' is.. le, ft..is H&ro6lyphics^^.

he feels it is enough for now and grabs the spray bottle...

nathan martin

Minimal Distance

god bent.

heaven rain.

staight chair.

arched ceiling.

round lesson.

old verb.

foucet crooked.

water shed.

turned wrench.

side glance.

lean hunger.

torn breath.

god bent.

pupils burnt.

round sun.

straight

whiskey.

nathan martin

Minnesota's Public Radio

hood covered lutherns wear their naratives
under a furrow of clouds, their earmuffed
stereo headphones filled with luke warm
momo-tones from garrison kiellors
microphone.

the white clay people commun in the clouds
discussing the progressive aesthetic and
of what it means to 'feel minnesotan'.

gathering together they fall down along
icy tundra's to form weavers guilds in
the grass.

they read faulkner and hawthorne paperbacks
talking a lttle less nonsense than most.

where strong coffee meets warn out floor mats,
a hand radio with a little static and a little oscillating
magnetic current searches through the snow driven
clouds for warmth and reason.

nathan martin

Missing Pieces

missing sides to my portrait lady

blessings in time turn under a
spyglass bewilderment

absent the clues round your
seamless skin.
and the light seems to reflect
unbroken along the borders
of your garments grace.

my puzzled lady with flowers
of chalk draws in the night a
purple hewed silhoete to carry
her hearts desire.

quick as fiberoptic resin in a fable

and i am as a moth drawn to your
flickering candlelit eyelids.

how can i make these hands
form.. fit....flaunt and flicker
into your frameless innocence.

how can these words consume
all placid enigmas.

teach me how to nurture this faith
between the missing corners
and are abstact angels will
be whole again.

nathan martin

Monologue Of A Rock

ordinary clouds on a thursday
afternoon overhead.

All is shaded and gray.
old testament in my skin.

i was there you know.

when calcium became bone
and marrow became life.

now the branches in the sea
have never swayed me.

yet still my kidneys unravel such
strange sands.

and the shores have all become
my diciples.

nathan martin

Morton Salt Girl

morton salt girl crying in the rain
frailly under her umbrella,
with dry salt for tears.

you were supposed to season
my world

instead you preserved
my hearts wound fresh
with your course words.

salt....ash.....gravestone....
tombstone...
darkness of death
valleys of night

these are the foot printed
bones that form the ressurection
of my burdened lazarus returning to you

the right side of the bed
with my head imprint
still on the pillow

come closer she says
my morton salt girl

nathan martin

Moving On

never another line beyond the standard crucible.

perigan dive, falcon plain.

we all scatter.

moving faster, simpler.

time has its talins in are rational.

sensible head, such a sensible head,
held by a thread.

naked in the garden at the beginning.

got a get out of this skin sometime soon.

never going to look back

never that vulnerable again.

nathan martin

My Calmer Creature

black coffee in the sea,
with a thermos for a light house
reading house blend.

granular earth in the bread,
or at least in the pastry window
next to the register.

vegetarians sitting at tables in
a coffee shop parallel to a bookshelf
and a row of abstract paintings.

maybe i should go over there for a little bit.

maybe make some light conversation,
talk about the weather.

maybe sit quietly by myself and do a crossword.

maybe do a mental handwriting analysis
of the barista's chalk board.

maybe look at all the polaroids of the regulars
and think about what i would wear if i was a regular.

still one space left, still a chance for me
to reach my southeast portland coffee house
bulletin board nirvana.

there i would remain tacked up on the wall for awhile,
a placard wearing black coffee drinking herbivore.

calm as can be in criss crossed shades
of blue and green.

nathan martin

My Pinocchio

bye bye lucid wristbone you have
shaken me awake to many times now.

back when it rained a lot against
the kitchen window.

all my dreams were kept folded up in
a brown and red quilt from my grandmother..

cross-stitched knees and ankles warmly
wrapped for the night..

in the morning there would be cereal bowl
milk rings on the kitchen table.

maybe even a little gravel in my skin.

but dont look now cause the backyard
swing is made of rust.

all my memories of wood and cloth.

see where I was sown together so long ago.

so get out the wrench and untighten the bolts,
my chest to open, my head to close.

nathan martin

My Sobriety

deep in the sea bleached white
whale bones sing in thier chains.

chamber music in the depths

i heard them in the night
lowering the stars as they sank
moving heavily through their watery
hymnals.

i swam in those dark waters and
kept on dreaming of their forms
until blue became black and a
saline solution filled my lungs

under a cold sky the icy constellations
spun round my magnetic head

i drowned my angel in
a bottle for need of words.

i drank in silence shades of green and
brown to swallow aloud all the others

until blue became white
and blood became bone

to numb in my icy marrow like
jonah, i prayed to be spat up on dry ground.

nathan martin

Nantucket Nursery Rhymes

gardening back the perennial shade,
no time or reason to follow the wholly
mammoth into his grave.

wandering whale songs through a nantucket
weather vain storm in the plow and bury
the fishnet parable.

a sower of seeds carries the mythic legend,
the horse drawn mantle and the weary knuckle.

but let the sea drown in its own sorrows.
for there is a harbor of stories in the dry
leaf bed of an old teacup on the porch.

the ambient light of the colodial silver
half moons, half shiverers and half
tumbles down.

an orchard of angelic promises in the
sky nurtures and gathers every wool
capped stone.

near polar latitudes along the borders
of a window pane freeze and keep out
every unknown stranger.

biblical knocking... pulling.. tears open
and lets enter the seagulls half hearted charms.

nathan martin

Nebuchadnezzar

nebuchadnezzar lie down,
your hanging gardens all around.

nebuchadnezzar can i buy some seeds,
my backyard is full of weeds.

nebuchadnezzar your dreaming to long,
now my yard has grown into babylon.

nebu chad nezzar...

Ive heard that you have a green thumb,
for the flower and the bee succumb.

nebuchadnezzar your worried head
has no roots now your dead.

nebuchadnezzar planted in the ground
still forever without a sound.

nathan martin

North Of Eden

Canoeing through the driven white winter
flakes a dim pair of blue eyes search the
landscape.

blue and white as well the fingertips which
reach to part through the thin bare branches
which once held green sprouted edens.

wrapped in thermal layers traveling into the
infinite ice garden, where wrist and rivers
flow cold.

the clouds overhead pour down blankets
of purity to guard against the intruder
the black bird and the taloned nest.

a feathers frigid song parts the branches
and falls down.. down... down with
the cold farenheight footprint of the traveler.

a coniferous verse unravels about him
beautifully down... down.. down futher down
into the heavy hymned snow.

he walks through the thick of the forest
breathing in the deep servant wind.

servant to the fires of his heart which
flicker in blue iris flames.

servant to the mountain, whose bold face
does not grimace nor shiver or cry.

wandering north through the wilderness,
through the winters chambers alone
but never lost.

snow shoeing hand in hand with the lord.
filled with awe and wonder.

nathan martin

Oaks Amusement Park

incomplete dystopia

memories scattered around mixed in with the large oak leaves.

the trees gnarled and twisted having looked after themselves for years.

the park itself is similar with lots of eclectic oddities scattered around.

large yellow sign post standing in an inorganic chernobyle faith.

waiting for rust or for the bumper cars to begin to light up and
move smashing against one another.

but it's too late for that, so they just sit there each
in their distinct directions

they seem as dead electrons around a strange archaic
nucleus of dandelions and cracked cement.

nathan martin

Of Salt And Oranges

a grandfather clock in the corner of the
room turns its grayhead and sounds.

it is the hour of salt... it is the hour of aged reason.
and i have lost all affection for the sweet naval of
oranges, which clamor one on top of another
on the kitchen table.

perhaps if i was an expressionist
i would express in driest terms the preservation
of ramses II, or the way of the fermented dill
pickles in the back of my refrigerator.

it is the hour of the second cup of coffee,
it is the hour of the coptic eulogy, and i am
as horus or osiris in the twelfth dynasty
at midnight.

now in the kitchen three chairs sit crookedly
next to me. with crystalline hands i gather
upon the table morton salt from the cupboard
and pour it into a gray dispenser.

i set it next to the fruit bowl with ornate
green vines drawn along the sides of it.

but it is the dried antiquities of cummin and
saffron that i seek.

i seek the harbinger of life after life.

but all i have is a 15 jar tiered spice
rack sitting on a shelf across the room
and a little less time.

nathan martin

Old Lefty

sometimes i want to write but
my hand cramps up
so i switch hands

now my right hand does not like
my left because he is always drunk
and he does not know how
to use chopsticks properly.

old lefty does not seem able
to be articulate at first either.
being referred to as the dark left.
a place where
q's look like r's
c's look like a's
and a's still look like a's

infact the intire alphabet turns
and renders itself to lefty in some
form of ancient sanskrit known
as illegable scribble

where
strange birds float down on silt
through the pens black ink Nile
cursing in aramaic
and chain smoking domestic
cigarettes rolled in the papyrus
of holy books

along the reeds of fingers
they pass like a mosaic law
held together by the thumb.

until one rises along the interstate
to show itself to a man in a
landrover following way to close.

old lefty you beautifully

misunderstood dyslexic genius,
how could i have only used
you for holding the coffee
mug all these years.

nathan martin

Old Velvet Paintings

jesus and elvis in a halo
of black and green light.
a pink madonna next to betty crocker
and ronald reagan standing
stately in his best suite.

all hanging along the walls
of tattoo parlors and chinese
dive bars across america.

now it is our heritage as patriots
to protect these last of the
wandering bisons.

nathan martin

Older Still

older still is blue than green born to late by the spin told doctor
whose cobweb logic holds a few silk cocoon secrets
re-entry of the womb with a little scattered potters soil, seperation of all rooting
tomorrows.

yet older still is the turnip fist than the bloody knuckle, scibbled names on rocks
who cannot remember. yet older still is truth than reason..

nathan martin

On Seeing You Yesterday

Your hair curling down around
your neck like spun glass.

vibrant joy of the inner church,
what holyness is this?

renewed light in my house
under a gray liquid sun.

your smile glowed so
radiant and beautiful.

nathan martin

Original Scientist

alchemy in me causes my marrow
to glow a little brighter.
a translucent halo filled with uncertainties
adorn's my ghost.

this time i will use the old broom
in the corner to sweep him away i think
before he becomes to drunk by the
window seals light.

which now cast luminous psalms
written on scroll's of dust, scattered around
wiegthless they swirl and drift upwards.

once again i turn to the scientific method
walking into the kitchen i pour
black coffee into a white porcelain cup.

no cream or sugar for my apparition,
as the gray pigments begin to
fall all around.

my ghostly fellow becomes
discontinuous and undone

and i am awake.

nathan martin

Passenger Seat Observatory

surrounding objects each with distinct names
dizzy and blurred.

consumating witnesses in a pair of
windshield wipers washing away the rain.

your head turned to the right slightly
looking away.

the rocks and trees lower and
draw so very close.

but you are somewhere else.

your belt buckled form fastened
to the seat wanders down the
interstate corridor.

how you drift through the lanes
so quick and so quiet.

nathan martin

Peach Gospel In The Cellar

In an old cellar mason jars
full of canned sunsets line
the shelves.

ripened years ago.

they have names like
sylvia's famous peach
halves.

each has a piece of paper
with a bible verse written on it.

one day a slim figured girl will
ask her grandmother to try some.

she will reach for the jar of john 15: 1

' i am the true vine and my
father is the vinedresser.'

snap and the lid will come off.

with a warm smile the sweetness
of a parable will be turned
into a crisp cobbler.

nathan martin

Pedestrian Pace

some move along sidewalks in barcelona
shuffling thier feet as they walk

some walk in the cloudy scottish highlands
clicking their heels as they go.

some wander a little to long

some are sponsered by samsung
as speed walkers

some curl a 40 oz under their
arm as they walk

nathan martin

Pharaoh's Journey

</>

a chamber is a figure
if a lantern is a thought.

remarkably thin thoughts falling through
the linen minds of silk mummies.

neatly pressed cooper
filled lanterns light the way.

passage of the damned hieroglyphic
pharaoh brings shadows to life.

flickering on the corners of the walls they
pass silently like floating reeds along the Nile.

a river is a choice if
clay is the beginning.

now in that still dry place tape worms are holy
and priests tend to their webs.

passage of the buried eternal eyelid scientist
wrapped in a constellation prayers and mud.

nathan martin

Philosophy Books

my technical response to the uneven landscape
is to waterdown my footprints.

so i sink as i step and grow a little stronger.
so heavy these great big thoughts.

i must move quickly, no time for darwins hardbound books.

no time to trace my five toed footprint and wait for my fossil
to turn beautiful or grotesque.

i've seen them you know the figures of the figurative figures,
they walk around in books without bread or water.

nourished by deaths constant response.
this place is so dry i think i might leave it.

i read once a line
' oh little clouds filled with great rain,
fall in dry places.'

i think that is a wonder beyond reason.

nathan martin

Phonebook Doodles

a yellowpage picasso somewhere
between
mullberry and mullenhauser.

daydream chatter creates cityscapes
with crystal raindrops falling from bent
and wrinkeled page corners.

futher down the colloms between
meeks and myer robots sit in a cafe
eating fried rice with chopsticks
and talking about the whether.

nathan martin

Pinecone Patriarch

some say the limbs of trees are telling chapters
a pinecedars verse in still measure.

some say a branch can speak as it splinters.
with cinders recognizable for seedling faith.

now pineconed buddha's roll around me
with secrets inclosed in thier bellies
telling me that i look like you.

those same lines round the eyes,
photosynthetic daylight seeking.
with stone marrow to fortify the roots,
structure the face and weather the brow.

twenty nine growth ringed years
past the hardened visage of you
with that bottle in your hand.

you were a pinecone patriarch
that did not germinate in me but die.

nathan martin

Porcelain Doll

hands that hold the porcelain skin,
so familiar under the fossilized
layers to reveal, a little of a kept lie.

a calendar of days in her wrist
that seek to express but cannot
gesture

now she will paint her likeness
day by day from stencils in a mason
jar set beside the bathroom sink.

emotional faults ground into stained
glass form her frail statue.
the fractured pigments
of a vain reflection cast to
little light in the early morning.

but if she begins to break
how quickly the hands that hold
the porcelain skin

cover with paint all those
faults and broken edges.

nathan martin

Pressure Point

i used to break crayan's,
when lines would blur and
scribbles would shift.

now i break pencils

my flint faced ezekiel blackened
tongued tip prophet speaks
in charcoal whispers.

the hapless refining of lead and
fingertips creates the breaking point.

dialect of the curved spine child...

now diadems of scoliosis
form my alphebetical vertebrae.
bent with the beauty of
a slant wrist.

the majestic snapp of a
skillcraft number two pencil,
causes vowel harmonies to break
against phonetic boundries.

breaking pencils like breaking
bread is for the holy and misgiven.

nathan martin

Prussian Blue

slight decay under the suns
metallic half-lit shoulder.

signs and sinews fall in the late
evening.

in every field the wandering stones
sigh and clap there tumbling foreheads
down a little.

lying next to the cleft of a rock ninety
degrees past a bent heaven.

there if you watch and wait you will find it,
the ground up pigments of the skies liturgical form.

now the stones cannot forget so that
the grass of the field may go on living.

the basin brought to return half empty
in the low light.

beautiful in its winter slant robed
garmets of light blue frost.

**inspired by the painting
'the entombment of christ'
by adrian van der werff.

first painting to use prussian blue

nathan martin

Purified Lithium

chemical crane,
lithium albatross.

iodized magnetic zion
in my head.

i'll run for days,
inside a solar haze.

corrosive reduction
under the sun.

the old search for
the purified lithium.

metallic filter to drain
the silt.

empty the heart of all
its guilt.

so salt the cracker and
absolve the sin.

an alkaline base full
of wrinkled skin.

nathan martin

Pyrite Prayers

80's oldsmobile wagon full of mormons
traveling at five under the speed limit.

a turtlenecked jesus behind the wheel
draws magnetically all pyrite from the
rural hills of zion utah.

gold so much glorious gold
and you can have it to.

just turn your tv dial to the trinity
broadcasting network,

set some plastic fruit out on your
coffee table as an offering

and send your prayer request
in to Plano Texas.

nathan martin

Rainy Portland

I know i'm not a saint
but i might be your martyr
even if just for a moment.

stranger my eyes to you

the ambience of two hollow
tabernacles passing in
silence under heavy raindrops.

our reflections caught in
the window of a coffee shop
next to the old church
on 11th and clay

you lifted your head to
exchange the glance
that said i don't know you either.

a few more steps past the window
and then there was only
silence and cracked pavement.

nathan martin

Ruckus, Me Ruckus

my name is the ruckus and i am sure
to bruise and clot all hemoglobin,

turn bright to dark red, metal to rust,
rain and mud in a season rush and gush.

i'll reckon to smash an oblong pigskin through
some lines and create a british rumpus,
a proper ructioning, ruckus.

then maybe i'll spit some blood out the
side of old an black and white photograph.
cause i am the original ruckus..me ruckus..

nathan martin

Sacred Highlighter

words lifted out of their mundane fonts
translucently reborn by the holy obelisk
held between the fingers.

academic talisman...

baptiser of all memo's and textbooks.
speaking in accents niether above
nor below the blue college ruled lines.

sanctified in a cloak of pure light.
seperating all that is secular from sacred.

set in italics along ornamental chapters,
the red lettered jesus walks down galilean shores
with a # 2 pencil and highlighter in his pocket.

prophesying of some alphabetical
ressurrection through golden ink,
highlighter and highpriest of all that is
written.

nathan martin

Saint Autumn

autumns rusty saint does not gather any leaves
but maybe a few brown bottles to recycle.

all he needs is a few more nickels then he can
once again stagger round september with his
bottle full of muddied puddles.

drunken an sullen he hangs around like the
industrial poppies, who's sledder stalks are
messed into a woven chain link fence next
to the mini-mart on barber blvd.

he can see through the window gilgamesh in
the back of the store chain smoking, he wonders
if he will ever be able to quit.

autumns forgotten pilgrim holy in his rainy cathedral
waters all mosaics on street corners as he hides his
secret of a cracked oval sun with gray clouded hands.

nathan martin

Saskatchewan Artist

north by northen

they live in villages of 8 to 10 people,
dont pay rent and make art out of multi
colored buttons and old bent tire rims.

they have warm smiles and icicle
beards that hang down in a
furrowed eccentric mess.

they are eskimos that write with
red ball point pens and speak french
fluently. except when they slip on the
ice they may curse and cry.

thier tears freeze into crystal cathedrals
with paintings of redemption
hanging along its walls.

they redeem us all.

nathan martin

Sawmill

all my life i have wanted to be a
papermill mechanic in minnosota.

i would write short stories on pieces
of sawdust as they flew through the air.

my grandfathers diligence would be for
all to see, my broken and bare knuckles
bleeding openly.

mumbling under my breath the holy scirptures
as i passed by vacant spaces.

the sunlight would reveal slight depressions
in a pool of diesel on the concrete floor.

and in between some clanking and cluttering
for a brief moment someone would turn thier
head and see the mercy seat at noon.

a motion of the hand would be given
and everyone would gather together
to sit on a couple of old bent metal folding
chairs in the breakroom.

only i would be left to stack a few ply sheets
in a far off corner, maybe saving one to
write the great american 21st century novel.

nathan martin

Schizo Chess Master

hopscotch gray ash leper.

quicker to the tray with the
embers still burning.

he smells of malt urine and
pall mall ciggeretts.

so steady his genius through
yellow tar stained fingers.

leaping brilliantly over checkered tiles
in the park.

nathan martin

Sexy Librarian

</>

when at most the others looked away
you were the only one left wrapped in
tweed fingers you read books and shook
hands with the corners of very
tall still rooms.

when at least the others stopped to stare
you were a vinyl voice who drifted around
the room creating your own naratives
and desires.

hardbound covered soft themed skin
so delicately complex.

before i was younger seeking to lift up your
skirt maybe even to take in a little of the
warm accent of your thigh, that soft slow
curve of your inner leg.

i remember sitting quietly staring at your crossed
legs wondering when your glasses would dropp
ever so slightly.

but of course your were fictionalized, marginalized,
transposed across the room between the shelves.

flip to the back page as you walk by and
the summary goes something like this.

my librarian lady sits across the way
in between hushed lips day by day.

self literate angel with a finger in her cardex,
holy in her house with a text full of sex.

nathan martin

Shades Of Grey

starbucks at pier 29,
god of thunder in my veins.

faster to reason in the blinding
light of someone elses sorrows.

i may sorrow a little for you yet.

is this cloth in my hand yours?

i may tear it a little.
before my mothmans hunger
grows distant. to distant for either
of us to understand or relate...

nathan martin

She Said, He Said

she said this air is our common denominater.

he said you smoke to much.

she said the shortest distance between
me and you is a four letter word.

he said you talk to much.

she said it is hard to draw a perfect circle.

he said you shake to much.

she said the trapazium metacarpal distal
is the 3rd bone joint in the pinky finger.

he said you are to bony.

she said bony is also a village in hungary.

he said you travel to much.

she drank her tea and quietly
looked out the window.

nathan martin

Sherlock Holms

Sometimes i wish i was sherlock holms
so i could wear a wool cap to write poems

then perhaps drink some tea and study my notes
to find the foggy killer who wears black coats

so in the night i would make my rounds
parting the mist with my hounds

with a lantern in hand over cobble stones
following shadows wherever they roam

then pausing to stoke my pipes dark seasoning
wrapped in a tweed coat using deductive reasoning

tell old watson, dear watson my friend
i believe our search is at an end

though in the morgue she lay long dead
watson grabbed the newspaper and read

the headlines of the london times
foggy killer caught for all his crimes

nathan martin

Sleeping Under The Powerlines

spin the lamp all the way down,
lay low the polio eradic skyline.

down to where beds exit through
lime hollow eyelids.

saint isotope on a pillowcase full
of bright neurons.

lead vertebrates standing upright in the
name of science shuffle like ghost
in florescent gowns.

a quick flutter of the eyelash and the
spirit returns to liquid.

microwave membranes lying on soft satin,
buzzing radon hewn pixels.

they float like tangerine slices in orange jellow.

strange apron grandmother for a god.

chernobol piety.... long robed orthodox priest
wandering through octane green forest nights.

nathan martin

Sleepy Monday Mariner

drifting, drifting with heavy eyelids
in and out of our conversation.
pilgrim to your words i wander,
circumventing around the room to
follow strait edged symetries.

cloudy, foggy, i cannot rise through this vapor.
so i settle in a cup of dark coffee.

then fogbell foreheaded stumbling
into iceberg corners of desk and chaires.
like roald amundson i drift narrowly down the isle
along the northwest passege of my cubicled sobriety.

nathan martin

Some What

</>whats that said some, somewhat said others
and thats all it took to start the fight.

the quick and dead argue, rolling around smashing
things on the barroom floor.

with me caught in the middle sailing my wooden
hummingbird arms and legs through the air wildly.

pitter patter goes my heart, flutter
flutter goes my blood grotesque
and beautifully splattered
all over the mirrors and bottles.

i heard some say in church once
death is in this communion.

but i feel great neatly broken so very
precisly across the still lines all around me,
day by day they surround me.

what's that said some, somewhat said others.

nathan martin

Something Encouraging

when it is all too easy to follow
after darkness, follow after a little light.

even if it is in lower cased gestures,
gather a few before they wander too long.

bind up the wounded sons and daughters,
return them to their happier selves.

you can do it without even trying...

you can do it while making some
toast in the morning.

when it is all too easy to harbor a little anger,
learn to sail with a compassed heart full of healing.

gather balm in gilead and clear a few stones
from the path of those who stumble.

nathan martin

Spanish Bullfighter

like a hot iron upon the palm
i bullmark blackened charcoal
to paper, searing each line as i write.

the ring of a coffee mug on my journal
turns pencil to spear coffee imprint
to dusty hoofprint....

and i am as a spanish matador cursing
the majesty of the great beast.

with its last threshold of a breath
in the pastures of praise, piercing
its side with a number 2 pencil.

so gently in it's ashen shore of flesh
i die a little too....

nathan martin

Strange Fiction

Speak into my left ear where I hear lies
the best she said.

I watch her turn her head...

Blood and water mix as she lowers her neck
down slowly on a slightly off-colored white lunar
eclipse pillowcase.

A thin clear-coated layer of second-guessing,
keeps a little residue round my outer
earlobed religion.

I listen to her worries but prefer
to keep my eardrum aquaducts
from draining their lower case
verbs and adjectives onto the floor.

So I keep silent, my only escape is
to impregnate my head with robotic
consistencies and go and poke at
the fireplace.

Now I place heavy Latin numerals to mark
the spaces between us.

You tell me that there is a fire that burns
in you and that it once burned between
the ribs of Adam....and that now it is mine.

So I stoke and fuel the fire with strange paper-back
fiction novels I found at a garage sale.

The light and warmth it brings is
enough for now.

Nathan Martin

Strange Plateau

strange picture frames lie on the scorched
earth of the barren plateau, crooked and jagged..

to strange for her bucket of watercolors.
to obscure for pastel horizons to rupture in light.

no resurrection of the multi-colored aquatic bow.
no dispersed water molecules ever form in the
sky of the strange plateau.

she standing there like a solitary arcane thistle,
disturbs little the vascular tissues and rivets
of the dry grass.

the crumbling tableland stretches out for
miles in its bleached open expanse.

it seems to her to be dissected by very old hands.

she reaches out to hold them and once again she
is daughter, mother, and sister to the blood red
dry earth, child to the hardened corrosive mantle.

the sun overhead shivering in its sleeve fathers her
for a time. in the high plains of the strange plateau
her soul grew so happy, though her body never
was found..

nathan martin

Sunday Canoeing With Thoreau

gently under concordian hymn's, drifting through handwritten currents.
where willows weave their lengthy signatures drawn across the calm collection of
a bristled pool. a library of leaves lies around the trees knotted trunks, dry and
crumbling. tossed carelessly and thumbed through by the knowing wind each
one placed indefinitely like an obscure character in a dusty warn old novel or
myth.

they tell in their darkened shades secrets of the ways of the squirell's. who
gather from treetop canopy's climbing down to rocky shorelines to lower their
heads in an early morning baptismal reverance.

they search with tiny hands through the soil's cyclical chambers. like hindu
children along the ganges, whose red dotted foreheads seem to perennially
sprout throughout the fields of wildflowers. impossible to number as i float by in
the marrow of a lone pine whose stern now breaks over the fellowship of several
large mouth bass who came to hear the reverend speak, turning in his low tones
through stone pulpit channel's.

now the oak pew becomes a paddle, so i tithe a little in a swirl. sitting with a
hardbound copy of thoreau next to me and a piece of dark rye in a paper bag,
together we break bread and drift slowly in an unsteady tide.

nathan martin

Tea

aqua dependent, thirsting for
the mechanical tin priest.

the lord is in the kettle when
the water begins to move.

now there is a river without reason
that flows from the faucet.

the faucet is cheap and leaks when
turned all the way to the right.

the lord is in the cheap faucet
for the lord is in all water.

there is a flame on the stove.

the lord is not in the flame
because it is too late for that.

the lord is in my tea.

sweet soothing calmomile.

nathan martin

Ten Key Babel

broken spanish under my tongue causes me to search for the root form and tell stories. when only the dead can understand..

trace back to the beginning the spinning form of darkness that brought times ticking finger and gathered a little dust for a surname.

now latin is a dead child in the streets of ecclesiastical dictionarys.

i see the masses walking they speak in angelic tongues. wearing japanese doomsday casio wrist watches that tick tock the dreaded hour back.

while only the quick can truly be dead.

except maybe for gods ghost whose halogen form turns over this dark place, hiding his atomic elemental symbols in the palm of his hand. he forms the wet and dry ground.

and god said 'let there be a firmament in the mist of the waters and let it divide the waters from the waters.'

now clouds drift by slowly, the falling of rain turns my raincoat prophet inside out. magnetic needles intwine.

my head is dizzy and all that is left is communication. wearing reflective tape round my wrist i spin a liitle sign language out my fingertips. my sickness is severe a lack of words has caused my ghostly prophet to not respond.

hymnals of anabaptist uprising in my stomach. i have walked to long and spoke to much already, this brach of reason is so very old.

nathan martin

Tent Revival At Night

superstitious suffering,
rebirth of all children with
holy relics round thier necks..

look for the signs in the heavens,
chase the rogue waves in the sky.

cold so cold the zodiak touch to
the bare skin preacher.

looking down to see the discolored
grass between the baptisms where
no water had ever fallen.

dry rock...bed rock doctrine shifting,
voices lifting into the night.

the earth leans to the left slightly on its axis,
a lantern flickers.

the majestic burning of all mothlike
fables illuminates the tent pegged
cornfield tabernacle.

nathan martin

The Barley Wire Octopus

</>derelict gypsies in the shade
speak with crows across the way.

through the barley field and the corn
spread the tenacles that were forlorned.

telephone wires that have no shape
stretching out so none escape.

some said that it was the cross,
some followed the lines and were lost.

nathan martin

The Birth

wrinkled hands grasp, twist and sigh.

so many others waiting outside feeling
that they were born to early.

sunday school lessons in the mother cause
all the angels to touch down and thumb there way.

out from the womb of constraint
comes a chubby face.

born to late for the canvas and the oil.

not much left to call holy now except for maybe a
pair of blue eyes.

she smiles and cries a little at the sight.

nathan martin

The Brute

dislocated association of pink,
the quick spasm of love leaves no trace,
leaves no form.

to bad though because even her shadow
was beautiful enough slowing shifting
along the bottom of the bathroom door.

i suppose all he could do was lie
there and wait on the bed, drunk like usual.

atypical bent angel crossings across the room
under the door frame cant keep his head
from the pillow.

she tries but she cant keep him near,
maybe because it is 12: 43 am she cant keep him.

or maybe it is because
in his dreams he is in love with a gypsy girl,
whose caravan smile is a armwire chair and
a few sad memories.

he met her when she was working her
side job as a waitress at the pancake house.

nathan martin

The Cement Indian

I did not expect him to be
so stoic.

motionless....

perhaps he had seen
to many cold winters?

never the less there he was
lying there stretched out.

preserved for some fool
like me to walk over.

it was about that time when the
wind began to seem inconsolable.

dry leaves fell from a nearby spruce
landing indiscriminately on his chest.

several others began to cover his eyes.

better get him out!

gotta get him out some how.....

going down to the local hardware store
i bought a sledge hammer and a chisel,
they cost more than i thought.

i returned and began to swing
away starting at his headdress.

i tried to be careful not to crack the
mortered feathers bending down
to use the chisel.

it was slow going at first but i
eventually got him out.

nobody seemed to even notice or maybe
they were too scared to approach a guy with
a sledge hammer smashing up the sidewalk.

there was a bird however overhead
who watched me, nothing majestic
just a pigeon.

he probably was waiting for some
crackers or something but i took
it as a good omen.

this seemed to help because i was tired,
cracking indians out of pavement
is hard work.

i needed some gatoraid or a cold beer, better
hurry this up i thought.

so i went and pulled my truck up and
managed to hoist him into the back.

he landed in the back of the truck bed
with a thud and shattered into pieces.

a thousand tiny little native son pieces.

i cursed a little partly out of feeling bad
for him and partly for all my lost work.

well the only thing to do now is go
throw him in the river i guess.

so i went up into the hills north
of the washougal river.

way way up to one of its tributaries
called stoney creek.

there i scattered him and said goodbye.

they say pieces of him can be found
all over america now.

however broken some of them may be.....

nathan martin

The Chronicles Of Minor Men- Part 1

warehousing men gather like fish in the hulls of ships,
with carhart's for scales. they steeltoe streamline down to the docks,
each in turn with camel cigarettes in thier gills.

mechanically downshifting through diesel juggulars
saturated in thick black coffee, they speak in tongues of angels
choke.....cry..... and curse.
breathing cold air mixed with the smell of dusty wooden pallets.
stacked unevenly like crooked steps in jacobs ladder,
that do not lead to heaven but maybe another smoke break.

inhale.. exhale... import.. export...
they offer thier prayers to the rain soaked sheetmetal gods.
down where watery ports corrode away railways the rust
is crushed and sold as healing balm for the nations.

early in the morning you can see them the
iron origami cranes folding cold and hollow,
beautifying the mens heavy industrial brows.

nathan martin

The Chronicles Of Minor Men- Part 2

pitchforks heavily leaned upon,
puffy cumulus clouds drifting slowly
across the summer sky,
parted by a wheather vain of
a rooster crowing in the wind.

bundles of hay rolled up bask in the heat,
like giant golden cantelupes in a melon field.

beautiful children grow calist palms for iconographers
to chisel and paint.

orothodox prayers are offered up.
scythes are swung to reap simple parables.

along baltic dirt roads pebbles are scattered
by combersome rusty old farming trucks
with wooden rails.

seeds bounce off and fall through the cracks
sprouting small communal agrarian gardens.

hens are kept in small huts,
they lay richly decorated gold leaf eggs,

for priest to carry over the shoulder's
of the weary men at the eucharist.

nathan martin

The Cure

□

what comes next and who should i follow
now that the sky seems to be liquid
and my eyes glass.

cloudy pockets of air separate,
two thousand degrees past the
derived plant base.

facimile days reproduce what
else was left.

so now the farenhieght steeple
becomes are god.

in that open space we all burn bright,
three thousand degrees past a timid heart.

there you were standing next to me

nathan martin

The Egocentric Poet

If your looking for the smart guy in the corner its me.
using the comparative method of etymology you will
find the definition of poet is me.
if i was a dinosaur i would be a thesaurus.
i also like to use big words in conversations like idiosyncratic
and unequivocally.

i am an intellectual giant im theocritus and atlas together
the weight of the philosophical world rest on me alone.
i seperate all of my isms categorically with schisms.

and when i go to starbucks they just say its on the house champ
because i once knocked out bruce lee and george frasier at the
same time with a 8 pound merriam websters dictionary
'unabridged version of 1913' of course,
calculating how long it would take for them to hit the ground
on my circa 1982 swatch-watch wrist calculator.

i'm the egocentric poet,
i'm the grammer-slammer

my punctuation is so proper it makes queen
elizabeth look like she is from south jersey.
and my bottle necked glasses are so thick
it makes gallileo jealous.

i once gangster slapped aristotle and quintilian
and then proceded to give an oration on the importance
of the liberal arts in classical antiquity.

in the beginning there was me,
i was there when adam named the animals
and i told him his definition's were to ambiguous
and that he needed to pronounciate more clearly.

i know everything!
vanity of vanities all of ecclesiastes is about me.
i'm all over the internet.
i'm the egocentric poet.

nathan martin

The Fishermen

black may turn to gray but gray
may not turn to yellow,

night may turn to day, but
still these clouds hang around.

saltine driftwood and enameled seashells
fracture against the course palm.

illiterate sons, unreverenced
staggering pulpit's
half diligent, half hungover.

early in the morning they return to
the docks the prodigal sons of galilee.

to curse at their sober seagull halos,
maybe find a wooden plank to lay down
some foggy poems and dreams.

they are fishermen and they have
never been so holy.

beautiful as halogen lamps in the
corners of dark rooms.

wearing their bright yellow rain coats,
they bristle gather a nets worth of fables.

nathan martin

The Grey Monarch

a caterpillar with a pint of guinness
is no caterpillar at all.
my dry leaf cocoon remains
left in the corner of a dim
bar with a dark pint.

metamorphosis and stumble
scribble and shift so as not to
slur well maybe just a little as
I lean crookedly next to the urinal.

now a butterfly with a pair of cardboard
wings might still be a butterfly
as long as he's not cut off to soon.

my coaster telling me all i need to know
an empty glass to my right reflects in me

this sackcloth heart hung
on a barstool for moths
to perch and feed

metamorphosis curse and fade

seven more weeks until
my monarch days

seven more steps to the
door.

nathan martin

The Holy Youth Of Sao Paulo

</>an ancient man under a very young sun
out lived the shadow of his slim suicide.

so he quit smoking and with a rattled throat
plead for the others.

his prayers were for the kids, the skinny burnt
edged children up from the cinderbox.

running, skipping they celebrate lent with
the soles of their feet.

creating samba daylight vigil's on every corner.

now the ash of gods presence floats on the
water through the navel of the city.

the drain pipe priest charge a nickle
for a bottle, over time some called it coca cola.

but still a dark skinned gutter punk jesus races
through the broken streets with all the other
holy youth.

they wear pink and orange flip flop sandals
annoited to speckled shades of crimson by
a bleeding grapefruit that gets kicked through
folded cardboard box goals.

the sun is setting now in the streets of sao paulo
and in the parks on every bench the old wait
in thier tabernacles of wrinkled days.

to sit and watch the pigeons turn to gray grail
in the half blind lunar hour.

they wear a coronation of lanterns on
their heads in the late evening

and speak in strange tounges.

nathan martin

The Incarnation Of Siduri

sitting at a well called
the sandy hut bar.

recessed illumination in the back
of my head draws out the characters
one by one.

my eyes flicker before the
incarnation of siduri.

she is drunk again and you can hear
the rain falling heavily on the roof.

i look up to view the bright citron
dragon painted on the ceiling winding
its way along the tiles.

i have flash backs of chinese dive bars
with extravagant tiny jade forest.

siduri somehow rising off the barstool
and walking out the door.

nathan martin

The Itch

it was so hard to reach behind his shoulder,
as time went on he grew much older.

he tried to scrape the layers off of his epidermis
he tried to pour hot water on it from his thermos.

he could not reach it though he tried and he tried
he could not reach it so he sighed and he died.

nathan martin

The Long Road

</>

a burden in the sight of near places
caught some.

filthy angelic touch soon to you reveals
much less of where you wanted to go
and more of where you have been.

crooked church doors hung on
sleezy wayside motels.

reconciliation of gravel and cigarette
ashes strewn along the roadside,
dashes of yellow collide in the median.

some witnessed it the walking of the neon
apostolic ghost in the early morning.

bleeding auburn yellow and chain smoking,
straight and narrow is the way.

crash goes the hardbound hymnal, heavy is the
steering wheel turned slightly to the right.

a burden in the sight of near places
caught some.

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nathan martin

The Minnesotian Orchestra Of Barber Street

there is a small park in minneapolis
along barber street.

not much to look at..

a baseball field with a rundown
playground on the corner
that looks like a good place to get a staff
infection.

there is a large mud puddle or pond
about 30
feet wide on the north side that the locals
have
named lake osma.

its said that they did it so that they would
have
waterfront property and their houses
would be worth more.

they take pride in their dumpy park and
keep it clean
considering it their little bohemian
paradise.

on every other thursday rain or shine from
may to september
the neighbors gather together to play as
the osmonian society
or barber street orchestra.

they play mostly nordic composers with
an extreme amount
of brevity and a somewhat low level of
cursing.

the chamber section consist of a

trombone player with an ac/dc tee shirt,
a long haired flugelhorn lady and two
flannel clad trumpet players.

you can usually find on a picknick table
next to them a wrinkled
copy of ennio morricone's concerto
the exctasy of gold along
with several cases of pabst blue ribbon.

last time i heard they were working on a
finnish version of smoke
on the water called smolke on the water.

nathan martin

The Pocket Feminist Zine

bubbly handwriting full of
gender specific notations.

fairy tales of rapunzel in a tower
of patriarchal oppression,
with leftist picket signs in her
front yard saying no suiters
solicitors or chauvinist.

power in a pocket.....
a pants pocket of course
skirts are sexist...

nathan martin

The Rusty Tin Can

raindrops collect, a corrugated tin metal
awning covers me in the early morning.

i remember sitting on those steps
so many times before and
listening to each distinct
drip..drop..drip..drip...

that would come off of the leaves
and trees as the rain fell.

and i suppose there was some
reason to be found or maybe
a requem or some somber sound,
but for me it was always peaceful.

the clouds seemed to continually lift and
offer up their palms and the mud puddles
in return would splash full of sparatic
rejoicing.

fearns and trees and rust and clouds
and foggy breath with me ashing a
cigarette into a rusty tin can.

and i suppose you can find beauty
in between several blades of grass.

and i guess that there may be some
meaning in a poem about a kid smoking
cigarettes on the back porch in the rain
next to a rusty can full of to many and's.

nathan martin

The Second

</>

the half drawn eyelid son grew weary under his lamp
next to the shade that drew his voice to a sigh.

slight the long shadow and grieve a mother.

the less sought after second born
son of abraham.

slaughterhouse drunk son of a b
dont turn to fast now or you might spin him.

slow the hours of the day.

slower still now the second glance.

the frail hand on the wall permits a
little stillness if only for a moment.

nathan martin

The Spider And The Cubicle

thumb tacked, tackled some say by the thumb,
a
bullied pencil pusher sitting upright at mid afternoon.
so thin his ergonomic spinal robot as he leans back
in his plastic office chair.

peering around the corner, around the darkened tan
hedges of the cubicled garden.

now the carpet does not have thorns but the walls
have thier prickly memo tacks.

the aroma of a polynesian wilderness streams
off of a coffee pot down the isle. expensive coffee
beans fill the cups of grumbling employees.

four auburn walls surround them.

they are speckled with plaster and paint at times
he watches them and drifts a little around
the room to evade the god of all square
candled boxes.

he loses himself momentarily in a thinly cast shadow
from a window three cubicles down.

like a ethereal black drape it reaches out to him with
diligate fingers it breaks up the mundane spaces.

just outside of its grasp a silver cord shimmers,
a tiny spider spins its fibrous faith carefully.

its diligent silken oriental web hung along the ceiling
simple as a puritan church.

nathan martin

The View From Down Here

two pieces of copper don't add
up to much but a skinny child.

bricks and bones resonate the
sound of poverty.

now drunk impoverished prodigies
chase the devil who wears newbalance
shoes so he can flee faster and faster.

seratonin serenade with a little
wool over the eyes. distracts a
few and keeps them guessing.

nathan martin

The Vision

No more buffalo or pigs who speak in latin
for they have all drowned in the sea of galilee
or perhaps been flushed down the Tijuana pipeline.

floating, crossing over to some strange land.

all that is left now is for their silhouette's to be
advertised on the sides of cheap diet soda cans.

they float by together past brightly enameled
porcelain that seems to mean something to someone.

the virgin of guadalupe shakes and foams at the
mouth looking up to receive her vision.

but all she receives is wax and concrete.

no more time for bison or swine who melt in between
the thin shadows of unreverenced barbed wire.

miles and miles of rusty wires twisted.

incarcerated in their youth they decide to cover
their skins with tattoo's.

some have tragic kings and queens
twisted around their hooves.

others have vibrant orange koi swimming
along their spines.

soon however, however soon...

the rains will fall and wash them all away.

maybe a transient on the street
will play the horn lowly.

maybe a priest will make a gesture.

nathan martin

The Wooden Ventriloquist Clock

wood and strings turn the clock's
involuntary response.
hands set in motion with
the turn of a wrist,
half past remembering
the moment before.

odd numbered time signatures
pull a wooden head and hands to fold
like some pocketwatch prophet.
who shudders for a moment,
then grows still waiting for the hour
or celestial string to slacken
and release him.

he is not his own but anothers.

course the hands that follow
the grain of his expression,
waiting for fingers to grasp and
guide him through his seasonal acts.

umbilical chorded gears ratchet
in him to open wooden lips.
the blackened ivory teeth play in minor.

severe and break.
how he hangs there
so still and without a sound.

nathan martin

This House

If my house was not skin
then it would have to be paper,
with ancient lunar calendars
written on the sides of my neck.

like a magi i would wander
moving in my secret phases
until many days passed
with a head of white
return home full and whole.

if my house was not bone
then it would have to be glass,
stained and frail
i would break in pieces
to form my mosaic the
drunken poet.

with blackened shades
of green and brown,
i would hang ornately
in some old window of a
luthern church in the minnesotas.

my darkened eyes being
brightened by the passing light
and i would be happy again.

if my house was not blood
then it would have to be ink.

poured out for the common good.

i would bind my wrist in holy books
and nursery rythmes never to
curse again

and i would be so whole
happy and content.

nathan martin

Times New Roman

so sterile the keys as they
punch, knock out their given slots,
each standing upright in line
like good roman soldiers do.

as resolute as stone icons
formidable yet acceptable
in all the lower 48.

times new roman.....
times new roman.....
me to death, crucify me
with each roman letter
because i happen to be
an odd character.
one not easily read or recognized.

i am old norse.
i am latin children parading
slowing across the page,
i am the tragic king painted
in rich iconic gold leaf.

i cant be bound in a book
i cant be put on a memo.
i don't fit in your mailbox, keyboard,
rubber stamped out font.
i am unique.
i am a character.

nathan martin

Train Horn In The Night

it does not ask... it does not see.
but with blackened hands
pulls at silence until it speaks.

it is the confession of silence in
the still of the night.

it is the confession of the married
man starting his car in another drive
way across town.

it is the confession of the builders
faulty pavement that lies cracked
and smells of urine and spilt malt
liquor on lincoln and 5th st.

it is the confession of the red bearded
tattoo artist named saul who loves silk
paintings of jesus last supper.

it is the confession of you and me as
we roll over to the other side of the
mattress, our lesser angels
broken hours before..

nathan martin

Tripping But Not Missing

some things change and
some things stay the same

walking into the basement bathroom
noticing how the light reflects off of
the mirror above the towel hanger

now there are mermaid bones mixed
in the porcelain and urine in my toilet.

standing there longer than usual staring down.

half siphoned out and my lips are dry,
half pack of camels in my left pocket.

somehow acrylic sanitary acronymns
float to the surface,
i stare at them but i cant quite make them out.

oh well what a waste i think,
i might have needed some of those.

then i remember the acid stamps
i had taken a few hours earlier,

i think they were called purple elephant.

nathan martin

Two-Tone

constel-fire lation-sky.

a toyota tercel scurries like a pale iguana
past desert mile marker 368 headed south.

pulling over hearing the welcome
crush of warm gravel.

we lie on the hood and look
up at the night sky.

you tell me there are powdered sea
urchens crushed into the paint
but we cant see them.

you say all the factories do it that way.

gala-contact leo-lens

thinly focused sleep knit tones.

so precise the hands of the
orchard astronomers luring
are eyelids to close.

the desert wind is dry and cold
little is goverened or reflected.

feeling the warmth of the hot engine
through the pale blue oxidized car hood.

light factory blue fades into the darkness
tanglebly felt through the nights
two-tone osmosis.

nathan martin

Typing 101

gargling to many buttons in my larynx
causes me to cough and curse.

now silly sullen sadness sought
something similar, tongue tied the
fingers are all that remain.

bury a white orchard sheet in blue
plum ink.

genocide every letter under a lamp
in the late evening.

create my own unknown condition
and form a slightly beautiful madness.

search for my messiah on the internet,
then page down and scroll lock a doctrine
of acronymns.

become a ten key disciple and sing a few
cap locked hymns.

maybe turn a few wax coated fingerprints
into a voice, then hit print.

nathan martin

Unknown City

this city behind my eyes has
a population of one.

windless sidewalks swept clean,
empty houses, empty streets.

this city behind my eyes is
so empty and so clean.

nathan martin

Va Worker Night Shift

in the hospitals white
walled memory
many stories are placed
drawn and sewn in

stories of healing and pain,
tears of joy and sorrow.

whispers in the ear
with a little medicine
under the tongue.

but all are blanketed
in the silence of the walls
white continence
or is it black

no one can see in another
persons heart

when all the beaded rosaries
have been counted
and all the saints candles
lie in wax on the floor
there is nothing left
but for the janitor to
mop up.

dedicated to walt whitman.

nathan martin

Valley Of Stone Icons And Swingsets

in the valley of stone icons and swingsets
there are no stone icons or swingsets.

but still concrete angels with brightly enameled
orange ribcages crash violently into one another.

now there has not been grass in this valley since 78
just cement with crawling octopus monikers
painted along it.

they were created by wandering transients with buckets
of red and green algae.

if this seems stange and difficult it was..

mostly for the artist who used the space for
their murals and dandelion leaves in
there loose leaf tea.

now in between the remaining cacti a porcelain madonna
is still with child.

she is working hard to save the buffalo..

all those silver nickels add up, she keeps them in a jar and
hopes to get some ink finished on her sleeve.

meanwhile tin gypsies also known as fortune tellers in
aluminum trailers are springing up everywhere.

but even they could not have foreseen..

nathan martin

Vancouver Community Library

self literate knowledge illuminated
under the quiet hum of ballis lights.

librarians looks full of books.

words hidden in corners and stories
stuffed high up on shelves.

rasputin next to twain tell
of to distant rivers one sunny
one bleak.

nathan martin

Von Neumans Entropy

Von Neuman must have broken a lot of pencils
writing his mathematische grundlagen der
quantenmechanik.
it is 500 pages i could have said it in three words

..things come undone...

like in my rum and coke here.

the ice in my glass melts, the dispersion of
molecules causes a perpetual motion of me
going to the kitchen to get more drunk.

inevitably falling apart on my futon in the
living room. while in my dreaming head the
topics of a conversation shift and heat is
released in the form of verbs and pronouns.

nathan martin

Waiting For The Sun

fortunatly we are caffienated so we can adjust.

the antiquated stars have all shifted,
spinning slowly they change into thier fall dress.

i know now the stars are all moth-eatin.

lucky for us there is still time.

we are young but when we move
we rattle like antique lanterns.

the stars are antique lanterns
therefore we are stars.

yet none of us excape without consequence.

an opal iris overhead blinks and flickers.

we all wait for the sun.

nathan martin

Walking In The Rain

walking behind the others, beside the
others and beneath the others.

walking down a set of steps
with a hollow metal rail.

beside the rain beneath the clouds,
the ribs of the earth seem to become so
very clean and polished to me.

arthritic rust in an ancient unearthed
stoic form, aged in its mineral doctrine
speaks that not all is clay.

grasping the rail feeling the cold
reach in through my palm.

the metal feels so very whole to my
skin allowing me to break a little
inward and steady my self to look up.

the rain falls continually around me,
a little water in my eye scatters
the gray light.

i dont want to see much and i dont
feel the need to be comforted.

now i am cold in the moist daylight,
now i am translucent like a mist.

i am no longer turning slowly in this
world of corrosive half light.

nathan martin

Watching Tornado Warnings In Oklahoma

Will it pass this way again nobody knows because
the community library has too many paperbacks
and the clouds too many sins.

will twain swirl in the rain?
will steinbeck hit the deck?

will it pass?

will a folk singer from the north play the harmonica
piss into a gutter and give some simple remedy?

barometric pressures drop drunk tongues
but in a cafe on main street there is still.

black coffee.

white porcelain cups.

thick calloused fingers.

all the regulars gathered there just like every other day.

an old tv flickers over the counter just off to the left of a
warped mirror that has labor union and mason stickers
from the early 90s on it.

nathan martin

Water Colors

Doctors say that we are seventy percent
water but i think that is bs.

those drawings you made when you were
a kid,
all those crayan drawings on scratch
paper.

thats what you are more than anything
else.

nathan martin

What Salt Taste Like

a pink tupperware container in the cupboard,
filled with salt kept in its acrid epitaph.

kept like snow in the clouds sharp to
the tongue but without the mouthing
sense of the children playing, forming
their little angels in the back yard.

senseless of the year of are lord,
the perfected praise without
preservation dries to the touch.

grows weary in the grass,
the unkept face not barren
but forgotten long ago.

so we keep the spaces distinct
and call everyone by name.

making sure to put everything in
its place and number the years.

for saltwater veins cannot remember
the days of innocence or of the angels
in the yard.

so we learn arithmetic to bind up the
hourglass staircase that lead us here
in the first place.

unsnapping the pink tupperware container
for just a pinch of the fingers,
one last taste on the tongue.

blood purified and chastened rushes
to the heart drawn by the meter and decimal.

a moment and a memory unravels in the skin.

leaving are backyard eden long ago
we learn to get by on a little less.

nathan martin

Wii Tennis

hands flying around tv monitors.
playing tennis, feeling like john mcenroe
with my headband on and nintendo
remote in hand.

coffee tabled comentators
add to the suspense, break point,
mental note play to his backhand
and dont trip over the couch.

nathan martin

Williwaw

you spoke of my williwaw in dry terms,
yet my williwaw survived.

my williwaw grew and learned to
speak and was given a name.

my williwaw at times can curse candles
and speak in foreign tongues.

how strange is my williwaw's form as he
rattles the wind chimes on my front porch.

they tried to chain my williwaw once and
he fled forever north of certainty and reason.

some used to ask if my williwaw would ever
come by again, but they don't seem to ask
anymore these days..

'wil·li·waw' [wil-ee-waw]

-noun

a violent squall that blows in near-polar latitudes, as in the Strait of Magellan, Alaska, and the Aleutian Islands.. websters dictionary'

nathan martin

Wino Sapien

wandering like an antediluvian cloud.

light headed astronomer.

nathan martin

Writers Cramp 'Abridged Version'

I once wrote a poem when i felt really cynical
all the letter's had pointed sharp edges.

another time i wrote a poem about a drunk dyslexic
it read in mumbles from right to left.

and this one time i wrote a poem about
a pen that had internal bleeding, it leaked words

when slanted between the thumb and forefinger
it filled pages of notebook's, and ruined

many a pair of pants in the wash,
but i dried it in the dryer and now it is dead.....

nathan martin

Youth

up down sideways
drifting.....drifting
with no direction
but..time.... time..... time

nathan martin

Zombie Priest/ Unknown Color

the priest have all dug their way out,
to lethargic to suffer another rebirth.

they need advanced medicine and
perhaps a good drycleaner.

heavy feet stumble and stagger past
the gravestones through the garden
over the self impoverished tulips.

the contrast of gray against
yellow is striking.

nobody had ever seen such a color before.

inside the old church the congregation turns
their hymnals to page fifty seven singing aloud.

'such a beautifully vibrant death we all live'.

nathan martin