

WHISKEY & FOX | VOL.2 NO.2 | MAY 2008

# WHISKEY & FOX



*Fashion*

## Tomaz Šalamun

### *Madreperla, Gifted to the Scythians*

Everyone, valued as twice the quadrant  
will die lined up with wood.  
I find shelter from the rain below breath,  
not in the breath.  
In the breath I hammer nails.

Inside, deeply inside, there were  
gray mattresses with sprinkled blood.  
We used to carry clods of pigs to the fence,  
laying them into the abyss when  
trains passed by, not to be  
heard too much.

translated by Thomas Kane  
and Tomaz Šalamun

## Joshua Zelesnick

### *Landscape with Wildflowers*

Wildflowers bequeath a wrath, pointy and tailored, shrugging their necks  
away from the ground that tugs them back. Throw a rock on them and the misery ends.

Enter: Serpent—never walk its path; it only leads to doom.

Follow a road. It seems so small, it never up and bellows.  
Know it once, know it well. Drop your mask and mark it.

The difficulty is finding a rock wide enough to cover the landscape. Then again,  
once it's found, a force powerful enough must be able and willing to lift it.

Enter: leviathan—it's strong. Convince it to swim on land.

Follow lines that seem so small, toss a stone and measure.  
Twenty up and twenty back, another minute longer.

Where does such a rock exist?

One foot right, two feet left, the center is not the center.

Shelter finds a way to pour its bosom on your face.

**Sten Carlson**

from *The Reveries*

from a perch I called down  
at the cars My mother

said the tune was cosmic  
I fashioned a necklace a leash

for us our tribe Once there had been  
a clear sweet whistle it was true Stranger

I tell you on purpose I became  
stranger building a dwelling-place for

what genius & didn't yet understand  
the heavy bugle I knew I didn't want whispering

in pink cubicles If asked my plan was  
to help people by ignoring them

## Robin Clarke

Three hairs = a man. Three sloping hairs = a woman. What distinguishes us from planets. The hanged and the unhanged have this in common: a firebird will shit you out one day in an ether that has everything in common with canvas. Black on black. Black does not exist in nature. Black on black on black.

### §

Even Picasso forged some Picassos. Even Velasquez unhinged in a night's disgrace. I tell my head from an empty chalice by how it fills with detritus from many beloveds. Tell me, out of what cross-hairs were you first born? Can you tell your hole from a body in the ground?

## Thomas Kane

*the principal voyages of discovery to america 1492 to  
1611 (south)*

---

although some have taken to calling them: a phantom spice,  
a mercury hoax, a revival of familiar loss.  
because a minority exists to rue  
the absence of new confection. and a minority exists  
to discern the science of jonah's second womb. we have failed  
in that no one new was swallowed, in that everyone here still  
requires a certain ration of light.

---

response: as there is no unit which reasonably measures this  
vastness  
of uncut cane. and even more simply,  
that such a wind exists, sturdy enough to waltz each stalk.

## Daniel C. Remein

from *missive to nathaniel hawthorne*

i can't say enough what it would mean  
if you would tell a fable at the revolution. the comments  
on the sketch of the mule were perhaps as enlightening  
as the arrangement we made for months.  
if this tomorrow, stamped and meant,  
afterwards flows out from a sketch of what  
i couldn't say, do not take it as a symbol  
for the experiment or a portent of a failure.  
only admirers among those i would not say  
showed up to account for the clearing.  
do not leave behind pure and true.  
if a true there wanted for a daughter,  
if a fable wanted for envoy, i am sure  
such a well-composed office and gardeners  
demonstrating the science of portent,  
would offer plans of their own for the continent.

## Kelly Ramsey

A visitor arrives. It is a child with a dog and a man beside them, apparently sleeping. So you could say three visitors arrive, but the child is the only one who speaks and therefore who visits.

The house in Taganrog where Chekhov was born. I'm sure you've seen it.

I'm a woman. I have no interest in Chekhov. Why are you here. And also, no.

I'm here to visit you. They said you needed comfort.

When I look at the child I too fall asleep, just long enough for him to feed a tube down my ear. Everything about him turns white as though pinched under his body in sleep. I cannot speak.

I can always speak. The visitor is a sentence in that he inspects us for faults. What did you do with the hoagies, you crybaby. Because I am a woman, I tell him, I love what Chekhov has done for adultery. To be honest with you, he said, the Pomeranian was the only character I could stand, but let me tell you a story: once he'd gone looking for Pulaski street, to find a man who ate whole cloves of garlic for breakfast like soft ears, but on the way he was detained by his body which was hit by a pigeon, an unfortunate sort named Gerkington. Now Gerkington as it turned out was toadie to a big union man in those parts, and he suggested to his body that they go see a friend of his who was concerned about fire. This friend had beautiful soft hands, so he said, just the color of fresh concrete. Gerkington's prodigious insatiable and rather large appetite demanded a bag of apples first, followed by several violations of the visitor's body, so the friend as far as I know still fears fire; they couldn't change her mind.

With the tape rolling a visitor arrives, and Shirley abandons her cigarette. Why did you buy that thing, you never drink tea. In her yard knowingly pecking seeds from the snow: pigeons.

## Sarah Bagley

it all begins when we make a real, working  
time machine from parts he passes out and  
doesn't wake up, and I lay against  
listening to his heartbeat not breathe

in the usual manner from  
the spine, as the head goes out

like a story. if I  
collapse to watch the past  
less circular than shining, will  
you remember me a

white spot in a grass photograph?  
a piece of cup? of course, it all begins

with it all begins when we make  
a real, working bit of bread wake  
up, baby, to ink and mail  
the breaks, gracefully to

touch the soaped hair,  
to turn again.

*Emily Gropp*

SKYLESS THE COUNTRY IS A COUNTRY inside, a tent I wave  
goodbye to, what I can't wave goodbye to evacuating, the  
subject feels the subject bend, but all structures with bent  
rods aren't failed structures, because we lived! for a starfall  
month and held, the ladder steady the rungs crowded me,  
as I gripped them, with strange joy bless metaphor, for what  
it carries away evacuating, an under and over, and above the  
bridge, you crossed to bring me to, the ship—it's a bird, it's  
a plane, it's COME OUT FROM UNDER THE TENT, where you  
were you where, you loved to change, the subject: newsflash  
inflorescence on the sea, wildflowers square your outhouse,  
our bodies also, have holes space built, into holes impossible  
to hollow

## Tomaz Šalamun

### *Tiepolo*

I stood there in my khaki pants,  
my teeth rending the curtain of time.

Fuck! Fuck! I said it with my open mouth,  
screaming, all this with a purpose, that if they'd just  
put the live hen in my mouth, she wouldn't thunder.

Feathers in my mouth grow.

I dreamt Khlebnikov. He had the moist  
snout of an animal, which belonged to darkness.  
I didn't see him. I was shocked by the smoothness,  
the roundness and the grayness of his snout.

translated by Thomas Kane  
and Tomaz Šalamun

## **my dress**

pinched  
tightly across plush  
shoulder blades  
we walked  
down the night street  
every street lamp beam  
an alien inspection  
of the specimen  
of flesh  
as we stepped  
into each cruel  
pool of light  
stadiums slam power  
off off off off  
behind me

**Julie Granum, 1981-2008**

*<http://whiskeyandfox.blogspot.com>  
cover design by Greta Hambke and Matt Lee*