

# FOUR AND TWENTY



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ASTERISKS INDICATE UNTITLED POEMS. UNDERLINED TEXT INDICATES A HYPERLINK.

# FULL METAL ALCHEMY

a bubble popped in-  
side

her ribcage , sent tiny gold-  
metal flakes into the air . she was quite displeased.

JUSTIN WADE THOMPSON

# IN THE DENTIST'S CHAIR

Random thoughts  
in Brownian motion  
provoked by the hygienist's  
borborygmi

Ivo DRURY

# ABRA-CADAVER

Nothing up the sleeves.

RICH MURPHY

FOURTH OF JULY 1967

Saw The USA Through

The Bullet Riddled Windshield

Of A Mister Softy Ice Cream Truck

ED MARKOWSKI

# UNDER THE TREE THAT OWNS ITSELF — ATHENS, GA

Four girls, tequila  
Adikia's sirens dance  
The dance of envy.

NANCY HATCH WOODWARD

# GRATEFUL

Appreciation heartens me,  
fills me up, ripens me.  
Berry on a vine, I swell.  
Bursting — to give you even more.

BRENDA JORDAN

# ALTERNATIVE

Considering  
there is a god,  
what else is left  
to believe in?

ANDY DURRENBERGER

## WALKING THE WALK

All the faceless shoes put on everyday:  
the chore for the fashion impersonator  
who finds nothing in the pockets.

RICH MURPHY

## FOR YOUR SHADOWS

You are a naked lightbulb;  
men like moths knock desperately against you  
but I would love you in the dark.

GABRIEL GADELY

## DRAFTS (82)

When the inbox and junkbox are empty  
its boldness jumps out—  
elicit emails trapped in purgatory.

JULIE ENGEL

## GOOD LIFE

Heartbeat and blood race for 30 minutes  
while treadmill number 9  
irons out the creases in my thoughts.

DENISE SANDRA KENNY

## LEAPING EYES

I sideswiped her truck  
in a Monday morning haze,  
and I am pulled into this world  
head first.

JASON TOBIN

# TEMPORAL

There are strands of hair  
still caught in her hairbrush,  
as though it is outside of time.  
I am envious.

ELISABETH SAUL

# PLASTIC WINDMILLS

Their plastic stems stabbed into the grass  
The colors of its blade-like petals  
Warped into hypnotic continuum  
in perpetual breezes.

KEISHA J. BENJAMIN

# AFFECTION

a bubble wobbles atop  
the dish soap, breaks  
free and flattens into a kiss  
on my hand.

TOBY SPEED

## OUT COLD

Rain put me to sleep—  
my dream in Morse Code  
Woke to a glazed deck—  
the wrought iron bench dripping.

NEAL WHITMAN

# NO GOOD NEWS IS NEWS

News, news is no good.

Is no news good news?

Good news is no news.

News is no good news.

CHANGMING YUAN

# UNSTITCHED

These pins once held the hems  
to be sewn by my mother.  
Now aimless,  
they prick me in her memory.

IRENE ROS

TWO LINES LIFTED FROM SOMEWHERE  
TO STAND BY THEMSELVES

Good girls wear pinafores ...  
And dance too early ...

LINDA ALBERT

# POEM ON CURLING TOES

It's like eating  
the thinnest slices of ginger  
and you curl your toes.

DAVID SVENSON

CHICAGO 12 / 9 / 09 1:43 PM

Display Windows

Mannequins In Mackinaws

Stare At The Shivering Men

ED MARKOWSKI

# THE VIOLATED

When the cane field is set ablaze,  
the angry taipan seeks a new home.

DAMIAN BALASSONE

# SUNFLOWERS

The air wafted by final understanding  
we stare past our struggles  
to watch the sunflowers, rigid roots but flexing still.

SALLY MERCER

# MOUNTAIN DEEP, RIVER WIDE

Random person named River Wide  
Facebook friends me, so  
perhaps I should become known  
around these parts as Mountain Deep

ROBERT VAUGHAN

# ARITST BIO

The cover art for this issue was created by **Irene Ros**, who is also a featured poet in this issue. Irene dabbles in writing, illustration, and music when she is not busy building exciting visual representations of data.

More of Irene's work can be found at [ireneros.com](http://ireneros.com).

## AUTHOR BIOS

**Linda Albert's** writing has appeared in many publications including *Today's Caregiver*, *SNReview* and *Sacred Journey*. An award-winning poet, she holds a Master Certification in Neuro-Linguistics and is currently training as a Jungian Pattern Analyst.

More of Linda's work can be found at [www.lindaalbert.net](http://www.lindaalbert.net).

**Damian Balassone** is an Australian poet whose work has appeared in *Arena Magazine*, *Eureka Street*, *Australian Rationalist*, *The Roar*, *Moving Arts Film Journal* (US) and *Green Left Weekly*. He is currently working on a second collection of poems.

# AUTHOR BIOS

**Keisha J. Benjamin** is a senior at St. John's Preparatory High School in Astoria, New York. She is part of the Poetry Association there and has now joined with two other association members whose poems have appeared in *Four and Twenty*. Keisha has hopes of becoming a novelist in the future.

**Ivo Drury** lives, loves, reads, and writes in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

**Andy Durrenberger** resides in Hillsboro, Oregon, where he spends most of his time raising three boys. He is a 2007 graduate of Portland State University. "Alternative" is his second poem published by *Four and Twenty*.

**Julie Engel** loves Oregon and recently earned her master's degree in writing/book publishing from Portland State University. She is the publisher of Jezebel Press ([www.jezebelpress.com](http://www.jezebelpress.com)), churning out limited editions of chapbooks, novels, and collections.

**Gabriel Gadfly** is a poet and part-time librarian living and writing in Montevallo, Alabama.

More of Gabriel's work can be found at [gabrielgadfly.com](http://gabrielgadfly.com).

**Brenda Jordan** works in the world of corporate finance and plays in the world of words. She enjoys writing poetry and crafting motivational messages. "Grateful" is her first published work.

# AUTHOR BIOS

**Denise Sandra Kenny** of Ontario, Canada, is a writer, poet, and former newspaper publisher. Her work has most recently appeared in the anthologies *Art's Buoyant Felicity*, *The L of Life* and *The Ambassador Poetry Project*.

**Ed Markowski's** short stories and poems have been published nationally and internationally. He has presented his words in bars, basements, parking lots, on street corners, at bus stops, and most recently at the National Arts Club in Manhattan and at The Chautauqua Institution.

**Sally Mercer** currently lives in London. She has been writing poetry since she was dexterous enough to hold a crayon, and regularly updates her blog with new writing.

More of Sally's work can be found at [lazylinerazmattazz.wordpress.com](http://lazylinerazmattazz.wordpress.com).

**Rich Murphy** is the author of *Voyeur* (winner of the 2008 Gival Press Poetry Prize) and *The Apple in the Monkey Tree*, published by Codhill Press. He is author of five chapbooks, including *Rescue Lines* from Right Hand Pointing.

**Elisabeth Saul** of Portland, Oregon, is a budding writer with a passion for language. This is her first time being published.

# AUTHOR BIOS

**Toby Speed** of Selden, New York, is the author of *Two Cool Cows*, *Brave Potatoes*, and other children's books.

More of Toby's work can be found at [tobyspeed.blogspot.com](http://tobyspeed.blogspot.com).

**David Svenson** is an MFA candidate at Florida International University in Miami, Florida. His poetry has appeared in *Poem* and is forthcoming in *Pocket Smut* and *Rougarou*. He is the Editor for *Gulf Stream Magazine*.

**Justin Wade Thompson** lives in a trailer park, in Austin, Texas, with his wife and cats. His poetry has appeared in *Evergreen Review*, *Gutter Eloquence*, *Full of Crow*, and numerous online and print magazines.

**Jason Tobin** currently resides in Portland, Oregon. He is a student at Portland State University pursuing a degree in English, and is an Associate Editor for *The Bear Deluxe* magazine.

**Robert Vaughan's** plays have been produced in New York City, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Milwaukee, where he currently resides. His prose and poetry has appeared in over fifty print and online journals. He leads two adult writing roundtables for Redbird-Redoak Studios, is a fiction editor for *JMWW* magazine, a flash fiction editor for Thunderclap! Press, and a member of The Nervous Breakdown and Fictionaut.

More of Robert's work can be found at [One Writer's Life](http://OneWriter'sLife).

# AUTHOR BIOS

**Neal Whitman** has published over three hundred Western form poems and haiku over the past five years. He has won the James McIntyre poetry contest and third prize in the Common Ground Review contest.

**Nancy Hatch Woodward's** work has appeared in numerous journals and magazines, including a forthcoming essay in *Southern Cultures*. She is a freelance writer and co-author of *Eldercare: Caring for Your Aging Parents*.

More of Nancy's work can be found at [www.NancyHatchWoodward.com](http://www.NancyHatchWoodward.com).

**Changming Yuan**, two-time Pushcart nominee and author of *Chansons of a Chinaman* (2009), grew up in rural China, lives in Vancouver, British Columbia, and has published poetry in *Barrow Street*, *Best Canadian Poetry*, *London Magazine*, and others.

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