

# FOUR AND TWENTY



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ASTERISKS INDICATE UNTITLED POEMS. UNDERLINED TEXT INDICATES A HYPERLINK.

# AFTER THE DROUGHT

Drenched poppies  
drop curtsies  
in the mud.

MARTHA CHRISTINA

# WATCHING A PAN OF BOILING GOULASH

the aerial view  
of a large audience  
applauding

MATTHEW KONKEL

# POETRY TASTING

Eyes closed but watchfully

Words roll in the mouth of the mind

Hints of Prufrock

Nose of Crane's incantations

Ivo DRURY



produce stand  
on a steamy August day  
even the corn sweats

BRUCE W. NIEDT

# EDINBURGH

an ancient stone  
catches a hipbone—  
bagpipes

KAREN STROMBERG

## FAT CAT POEM

The cat is fat  
But still stalking.  
Swinging belly, squat haunches  
But still stalking.

TOM THUMB



heat lightning  
outside the window  
war on TV

BRUCE W. NIEDT

## CLOCKWORK

Unmysterious day,  
full of dime-a-dozen sounds  
sloshing like the contents  
of a teacup on a train.

JILLIAN SMITH

## VACATION

standing on the pier  
watching surfers and sunbathers  
I turn the jar over  
her ashes fall through my fingers

TRACY DAVIDSON

## WHAT HAVE I DONE?

No real food or sleep for days —  
only doll's head tea in a rusty bucket  
brewed with scalding tears.

TIM HAWKINS

# MAPPING

Change a letter: east  
turns west. Change  
two: north turns south,  
and you're hopelessly lost.

MARTHA CHRISTINA

# ARCHEOLOGIST

I sift sand,  
careful to touch nothing—  
cat box

KAREN STROMBERG

## SUMMER SYMPHONY

Mower gums, coughs, then hums

Ka-chink, that was a rock

Jays critique the yard work

Heavy-footed squirrel on top

JENNI THIESSEN



loon calls over the water  
our laughter in return

JOANNE MERRIAM



Across scrolls and sagebrush  
Sweep armfuls of lush tunics  
And brush strokes

TOM THUMB

## SNAPSHOT

Poems are like photographs —  
frame, focus, flash.

Check the light and depth of field,  
crop out all the trash.

KATHLEEN UNGER HART

## HAIKU CXV

warm ripe strawberry  
taste of summer's affection  
as shadows lengthen

DT.HAASE

# HOURGLASSES

Eyes close slowly, deliberately  
as though he can't be rushed in  
anything—  
even the unconscious act of blinking.

JILLIAN SMITH

## AT THE SENIOR GAMES

I was driving around the parking lot  
looking for my car when  
a friend asked me  
what I was doing

BRUCE BEN POPE

## SMALL TRUTH

I lie still  
but less and less  
to myself.

KELSEY ERIN SHIPMAN

## RECALL

On the news they hear something  
about Toyota runaways.

Later, he floors the Camry,  
laughing while she screams.

BARRY BASDEN

## BICYCLE

Retirement home dusk:  
A bicycle built for two,  
Rear seat riderless.

ROBERT DEMAREE

## SEPTEMBER

sunlight stitched hard through  
cicada wings and broken shells—  
tossed to the ground,  
rubbed in the dirt.

SARAH LUCILLE MARCHANT

## TWO DANDELIONS

I hope you are still dancing  
In the field  
While I burst through a crack  
Of city sidewalk

BRITTANY MICHELSON

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This month's cover art, "Pacific Strip," is by **Karim Hetherington**. Karim is an artist, illustrator, and designer from the UK.

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**Martha Christina's** short poems appear frequently in *Brevities*, as well as earlier issues of *Four and Twenty*. Longer work appears in *The Aurorean* and *The Orange Room Review*.

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**Bruce Ben Pope** is a retired businessman. At age eighty, he throws the javelin competitively throughout the United States. Pope lives in Paducah, Kentucky, where he's been painting for thirty-eight years. | [www.fineartamerica.com/art/all/bruce+ben+pope/all](http://www.fineartamerica.com/art/all/bruce+ben+pope/all)

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