POETRY NORTHWEST

Volume XIX | Issue 1 | Summer & Fall 2024 | \$17

2024 JAMES WELCH PRIZE WINNERS

Kara Briggs Kateri Menominee

POETRY

Rob Arnold

Emma Bolden

Kai Carlson-Wee

Leila Chatti

Erica Dawson

John Freeman

Janice N. Harrington

Anna Maria Hong

Hyejung Kook

Elizabeth Metzger

Tyler Mills

Nomi Stone

 $Lynne\,Thompson$

Robert Wood Lynn

& more

FEATURES

CROSSINGS Lena Khalaf Tuffaha

translates Zakaria Mohammed

IN-PROGRESS Erik(a) Jonah's

School for Runaways

William Archila's Cipitio

Alexandra Risley Schroeder's

Solutions

PRESENTING Daisy Rosenstock

ESSAY Lauren K. Watel on

Prose Poems

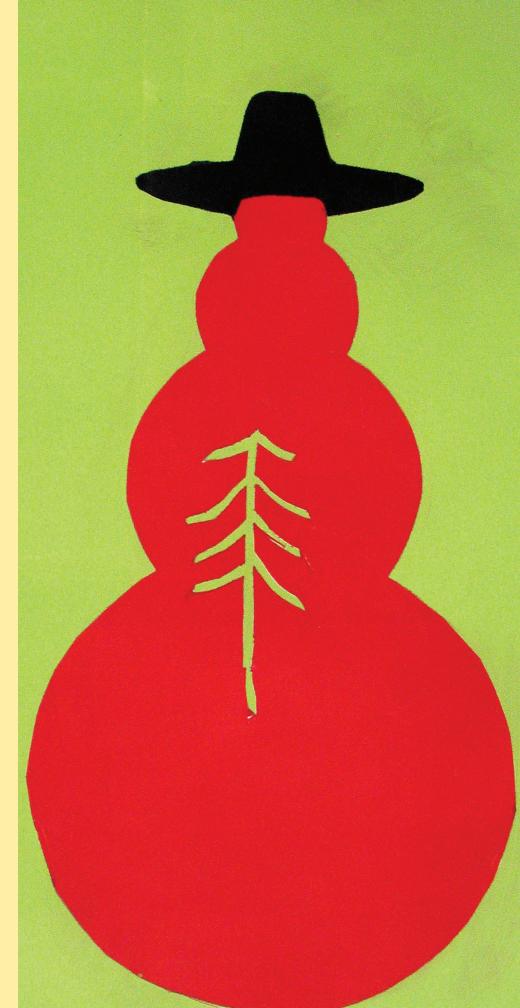
HOW TO Rob Schlegel

I CALL IT JOY Molly Williams

ART

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith





POETRY

NORTHWEST

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Siolim

Before this bird disappears into the darkness of the trees it must skim the surface of the water so close it could almost touch its reflection. The river must turn slowly past a bend in the shore and towards the sea. The women in backwater homes must draw from it wake to it bring their children to see how it glimmers. A man on a bicycle must ring his bell announcing bread or fruit. I must turn my head upriver to ask you to buy some to see you walking along a low brick wall. You must peer into the depths of the water wonder at its direction at the ethics of skipping stones. I must think how much of this I will remember how much will fade. How long the bird will live once it has disappeared into the trees.

translation

at the cusp of evening two women prepare a home for visitors. crescents of onion fall from knife edge a murmured exchange arabic for like this? a little more the garlic is over there. wiping dishes by the sink I accept that what is distant need not be lost. there is breadth enough in this life for bridges. things may pass through the hands of others but I will receive what I need to know.

ROB ARNOLD

Close

It was a close call. That's what you say sometimes when you have failedyet again—to die. When, for example, you nodded off and drove the rented Mustang into a highway guardrail outside Scranton. Or the time you slid five stories down a mud-slick ravine until a tree root snagged your foot. Or when you cut a corner too fast and wedged your bicycle between two box trucks, a thin blue column of daylight shimmering before you like a life you had yet to live, the closing gap a kind of clock counting down. You could see the great black tires turning at eye-level, and you could feel the compression, gentle at first, of your pinned shoulders, your ribcage, lungs squeezed of air as you and your bicycle were dragged along the narrowing line between this world and the singularity that awaits us all. It almost doesn't matter what happened next, that you were somehow expelled out the other side, intact and unharmed. and that it did not feel like a rebirth or revelation. But when you ask later to be held close, this is what you are asking for: to be held the way that death might hold you, warm and fluid, like blood pooling around the chambers of the heart, then be released once more into the cold clear brightness of air.

LINDSAY ROCKWELL

Speaking of Loneliness

I sliced strawberries with a razor this morning. Poured them into

a yellow bowl. The sun was doing its rising thing.

The weight of it. Too round. Too unspectacular to bear.

And the seam of me—so delicate, a horizon unmet.

Still, I prepare for magic—listen to music that beats

like hooves galloping the brink. Beloved, I'm empty

as a box of air. A great cavity the cold titillates. I wobble.

My shoes too falling apart to wear. And it hurts to walk

through wood. Pine needles prick. Leaves hustle

and whisper trying to spark my box's air.