

# **GOOD TIMING**

Better to be early than late, so early, I'm at the calm prelude,

before the Big Bang woke up the cosmos, and various matters of history

streaked out into the future.

I want to arrive
before minute and second hands

began sweeping us ahead, ahead, into the pile-up of the present,

and if I can't see the curtain rise on creation, let me be there

when my father in GI khakis glanced at my German mother for the first time as she stepped over Munich rubble and glanced back.

Robert Lowes

# GRAMMA, RULES

He was a verb Go run march She was an adverb Slowly carefully gently Their sentence was short.

He was a noun Man man man She was an adjective Small tiny timid Big Mistake.

She was a run-on sentence He was punctuation He tried to restrict her She wanted to be free.

Not everyone wants to live by the rules.

Fay Ashby

### **CACOPHONY IN CONCERT**

On stage, we were no ensemble, filling the chairs like we were and percussing under our breath.

A row of violence fiddled; *oompah-pah* farted the tube as the harpy was coming unstrung.

The oboys were back in the corner, texting the saxes on phones that some brassy strumpet was hot.

Offkeys of the keyboard were hammered; notes of their discords kept time to the bass jello's case of the shakes.

Outdinned by the clash of simples, dums de-dumming offbeat, I played the lead buffoon.

The conductor waved his baton, so we waved back to him.

None of us knew the score; tone-deaf to the chorus of boos.

Ted Charnley

#### ART CLASS FOR ADULTS

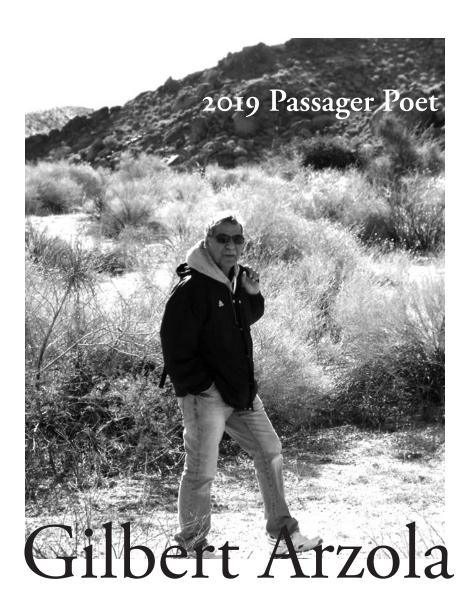
My husband is drawing his shoes. He learned in class about cubes and cones, spheres, and shadows. Now aglets, laces, insole, heel appear – meticulous, solid, suspended mid-air on his easel.

We're not accustomed to aging. Past decades went by with such cheerful, inconsequential waves. Now my friends have bad bones, canes, sick spouses, and my own has turned introspective as a tulip tight-wrapped

around darkness. Or graphite: the black dust he draws over textured paper then feathers with a thumb, shaping shadow and light till images emerge, like photographs rising from a chemical bath.

I think of Venus on her half-shell, but Whitman is more apt, bequeathing himself to the dirt he loved. *Look for me under your boot-soles*, he said. Now he waits under the second shoe, the one my husband hasn't finished yet.

Ruth Hoberman



## INTRODUCTIONS

I should tell you who I am.

Show you pictures of me before there were things to hide.

I should offer me up like butter and bread.

As easy as pie.

As calm as a sin.

I don't know another way.

I keep me sane and that's enough.

I push at the air and paint up my face so the Mexican boy will stay in his place

and not make a fuss.

I should tell you what I think, lead you into some discussion of me. Because there are Angels I think and some sort of God that offers enough, but only enough.

I know, don't think I don't know.

Don't think I don't see.

This God of yours playing cards with my soul.

I'll never come clean. I'll never come clean.

Trying to remember the prayer for all this:

You can pluck out my eyes and still I will see.

# **MARCH 2015**

Almost sixty a dozen years a widow shoveling snow when a great presence sweeps

out of the forest sails across the yard tilts and disappears into a bank of trees.

Without a word without a sound that snowy owl taught me

Death can surprise us only once but life? Again and again.

Julie Cadwallader Staub

Irene Apostoleris, Gilbert Arzola, Fay Ashby, Adrienne Asher, Dianne Woods Ashley, Merry Benezra, Judith Bernal, Christopher Buckley, Kathleen S. Burgess, Phyllis Carito, Ted Charnley, Jeanne Cook, Mark Defoe, Jerome Gagnon, Gene James Gilbert, John Glowney, Judith Goedeke, Ruth Goring, Charles Grosel, Ruth Hoberman, Guy Hollyday, Betty Ann Howard, Joanne Jagoda, Christine Jones, Judy Kaber, Jen Karetnick, Ruth Moon Kempher, Leatha Kendrick, Lynne Knight, Iris Lee, Michael H. Levin, Robert Lowes, Peter Lucas, Kathleen Lynch, Katharyn Howd Machan, Chuck Madansky, Sheryl Massaro, John McGill, S. B. Merrow, Michael Miller, Margaret Lunden-Molinari, Beth Morris, Anne Mugler, Sheila A. Murphy, Bonnie Naradzay, Edward Nudelman, Miriam O'Neal, Scudder Parker, Kimberly Peterson, Alan Reese, Rebekah Remington, John Ridland, Sophia Rivkin, Alida Rol, Marian Shapiro, Annette Sisson, Judith Slater, Jim Smith, Constance Snyder, Julie Cadwallader Staub, Ann Struthers, Bonnie Thurston, Memye Curtis Tucker, Lee Varon, Viviane Vives, Gerald Wagoner, Doris Watts, Kathi Wolfe, Rachelle Woods, John L. Wright, James Zimmerman, Patricia Zylius

# Dassager