THE PARACLETE POETRY ANTHOLOGY

2005–2016
SELECTED AND NEW POEMS

EDITED AND INTRODUCED BY MARK S. BURROWS

FOREWORD BY JON M. SWEENEY

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For
Phyllis Tickle

(March 12, 1934–September 22, 2015)
a guiding light on the editorial board of Paraclete Press
with gratitude for her commitment to poetry
and to the truth of beauty
in word and deed

CONTENTS

Foreword xi
by Jon M. Sweeney

Introduction: "A Sense of Presence": Poetry and the Education of the Soul xiii
by Mark S. Burrows

"On the Threshold of the Poem," by Anna Kamieńska, translated by Grażyna Drabik and David Curzon xxix

SCOTT CAIRNS 1
From *Slow Pilgrim: The Collected Poems*
Sacred Time 2
The Theology of Delight 3
Heavenly City (Ουρανούπολι) 4
Murmur 5
Idiot Psalm 9 6
New Poems
Late Sayings (ἀργὰ ἀγράφα) 8
Subtle Sin 9
Daily Sacrifice 10
Feed My Sheep 11
Recreation 12
Anaphora *for Elláda* 13

PHYLLIS TICKLE 15
From *Hungry Spring & Ordinary Song: Collected Poems (an autobiography of sorts)*
Morning Lament 16
Guiltless Ease 17
The Cranes 18
Old Man River 19
Mountain Songs 20

Tiptonville, Tennessee 21
Manual Labor 22
Ordinary Song 23
Wisdom 25
On Leaving 26

PAUL MARIANI 27
From *Deaths & Transfigurations: Poems*
Wasn't It Us You Were Seeking? 28
New York, Christmas Eve, 1947 29
Absence of Crocus 30
Passage 32
Exile 33
I Did Say Yes 34
New Poems
The Open Window 36
Mexico 37
Pantoum for East Fifty-First 39
The Sick Man 41

ANNA KAMIEŃSKA
TRANSLATED BY GRAŻYNA DRABIK AND DAVID CURZON 43
From *Astonishments: Selected Poems*
Gratitude 44
Through the Body 45
Small Things 46
A Prayer That Will Be Answered 47
Lack of Faith 48
A Prayer 49
New Translations
The Prayer of Job 52
The Body and Wind 54
Primary Things 55
What a Word Can Do 56

FR. JOHN-JULIAN
From *Eyes Have I That See: Selected Poems* 57
Care 58

Long Wanderings 59
Cloister 60
Eyes Have I That See 61
He Sleeps 62
New Poems
Psalm 23 64
Autumn Dragon 65
Born 66
Singing 67
I Could Have Loved a Farmer 68

SAID
TRANSLATED BY MARK S. BURROWS 69
From *99 psalms*
lord / you can pray to everything 70
look o lord / i don't sing your praises 71
lord / spread wide your arms 72
look lord / i go to a tree and kiss its trunk 73
lord / i refuse / to engage prayer as a weapon 74
New Poems
i think / so that the earth will keep turning 76
whoever evades the south /
to endure the truth 77
wind and refugees / expose our seams 78
rain / a blind pilgrim / prays for the earth 79
your eyes know / of things 80

BONNIE THURSTON
From *Practicing Silence: New and Selected Poems* 81
Late Vocation 82
Monk's Prayer 83
The Sixth Day 84
Peniel 85
A Burning Deep Within 86
New Poems
Everyone's Horizon 88
On Leaving 89
In the Eastering Cosmos 90

Conundrum 91
Living by the Word 92

GREG MILLER
From *The Sea Sleeps: New & Selected Poems* 93
In the Pocket 94
Strasbourg 95
From Fire by Fire 96
Stroke 97
Wanderer 98
Service 99
New Poems
Gratefulness 102
Into the Wilderness 103
Reboot 104
Love Song 106
Editor 107

WILLIAM WOOLFITT
From *Charles of the Desert: A Life in Verse* 109
The Pangs of Wanting 111
Blue Aster 112
Consider the Ant 114
Pied Crow 115
Stronghold 117
New Poems
Crummies Holiness Church, Harlan County 120
Flat-Spired Three-Toothed Snail 121
Ring of Earth 122
Mountaintop Removal Site 124
Gila River Relocation Center 126

RAMI SHAPIRO
From *Accidental Grace: Poetry, Prayers, and Psalms* 127
Psalm 29 128
Psalm 42 129
I Am the World 131

Wonder 132
And You Shall Love 133
New Poems
Loving You 136
From Light to Light 137
A Secret 138
In the Shadows 139
Language Matters 140

THOMAS LYNCH
From *The Sin-eater: A Breviary* 141
The Sin-eater 143
Argyle at Loop Head 144
Argyle's Eucharist 145
He Posits Certain Mysteries 146
Argyle on Knocknagaroon 147
New Poems
Genesis 3 150
Laying the Precious, Pagan Baby 151
Twelve Days of Christmas 152

PAUL QUENON
From *Unquiet Vigil: New and Selected Poems* 153
Merton's Novices: Late 1950s 154
Practical Bell 156
My Last Poem 157
Hiker's Guide to the Monastery Knobs 158
Day Withholding 159
New Poems
The Heavens Expound . . . 162
Benedict & Scholastica 163
Still Remains 164
Great Art 165
Four Haikus 166

RAINER MARIA RILKE
TRANSLATED BY MARK S. BURROWS 167

From *Prayers of a Young Poet*

My life is not this steep hour 168
I live my life in widening rings 169
I love the dark hours of my being 170
If only 171
You darkness that I come from 172
Because someone once desired You 173

New Translations

Apollo's Ancient Torso 176
You're not to wait until God comes 177
Entrance 178
Quiet friend 179
Oh say, poet, what you do? 180

About the Authors 181
Acknowledgments and List of Sources 187

FOREWORD

There are a few pleasures left in book publishing. One is also a privilege: to occasionally be allowed to bring out books that the marketing people aren't quite sure they'll be able to sell well. Then, a publisher feels that he or she is able to fulfill the prophetic aspect of our work that drew us to it in the first place. *Perhaps I may help to change a few minds and hearts. . . .*

The poets in this volume were all published with this tenacious hope, since everyone in the business knows that poetry is a hard sell. At any given time, you could quite literally count on one hand the number of poets whose work makes a solid profit for their publishers. The rest is what we call mission. That's the first delight I have in seeing what Mark Burrows has so beautifully curated in this collection.

The second delight is the sure knowledge that I and my colleagues at Paraclete Poetry—during the years I served as editor-in-chief and, subsequently, as publisher—have long known: people, whether religious or not, need poems. Poems help us to quell doubts as well as raise questions. Poems help us explore our emotions and spark our imaginations. And they slow us down. To read a poem well is to go slowly, and every good poem resists what's easy.

A third delight in this volume is a personal one. Indulge me for a moment please. This delight is what I enjoy most about poems: the way in which we (and, in this case, I) "discover" them, still. In each case, I remember where I first found the poets in this volume, and the feeling of delight I experienced when I did.

I found Br. Paul Quenon on the shelf of a monastery gift shop in Georgia in a thin volume from a small press. I soon realized it was ironic to find him on a shelf, because to know his poetry is to know that he's rarely indoors, let alone settled in the way one assumes of a Trappist. I found Bonnie Thurston years earlier in *The Christian Century*. I met her first, there, as a poet, only later to know her as one of the smartest people I'll ever meet. With Scott Cairns, the pleasure of the discovery was in the hearing, at a reading he gave twenty years ago. I know dozens of people who have come to know Cairns

that way, and stayed to read more. Paul Mariani and Thomas Lynch, too, I found at readings, and then became one of their groupies. They all make poems for the page that take on a different life when spoken.

Phyllis Tickle, my old friend, I'd never read as a poet until I scoured her out-of-print work while compiling *Phyllis Tickle: The Essential Writings*. A longtime member of the Paraclete editorial board, she usually remarked that her career in verse was over. I laughed and cried when reading poems she'd written about her children and rural life, and quite literally forgotten, some fifty years earlier. Scholar-professor poets Greg Miller and William Woolfitt were passed to me by scholarly friends with notes such as, *You need to read this. He's good!* Many important books have come to me in that way. Rainer Maria Rilke I found, like so many have, in college, but I never understood him until Mark Burrows translated and opened the work up for me. SAID, whose work also appears here in translation, was sent to me by Mark, with a note that read, "He's one of Germany's most respected poets today. Shades of Rumi, but much more." I was soon hooked. Then there is the glorious Polish poet Anna Kamieńska, who barely escaped the Nazis. I first encountered a poem of hers in a collection compiled by Czesław Milosz, appropriately titled, *A Book of Luminous Things*, a few years before Paraclete began publishing poetry.

Fr. John-Julian was a friend and colleague before I ever knew he was a poet. He was in his eighties when we published his book of poems, and yet we felt we'd discovered a clergy-poet in the tradition of Donne and Hopkins. Rami Shapiro, too, I'd known for years, professionally, and for his other work in prose, before realizing that he was also a poet of great importance. In Rami's case, I realized this in *shul*, sitting beside my wife, since many of Rami's poems began as prayers and appear in many Jewish prayer books (*siddurim*). He sings like a psalmist.

They are gems, all. May this book change more than a few minds and hearts.

Jon M. Sweeney
Editor-in-Chief and Publisher at Paraclete Press, 2004–2015

INTRODUCTION

"A Sense of Presence": Poetry and the Education of the Soul

Mark S. Burrows

> Where do we find what's lasting? Where do the deathless things hide? . . . Maybe we're not altogether alone in our empty room, in our workshop: if so many writers love solitude it may be because they're not really all that lonely. There really is a higher voice that sometimes—too rarely—speaks. We catch it only in the moments of our greatest concentration. This voice may only speak once, it may make itself heard only after long years of waiting; still, it changes everything.[1]

We are made for poems. As children, we come to them naturally, delighting in how words play on our tongues, whether in nursery rhymes and lullabies or the songs we make up in the delicious hours of daydreaming. In their early presence in our lives, poems are companions to us in the ways they lure us into the dance of speech. They are for us tools of discovery and expression, inviting us to delight in the newness of language, initially for their sounds but just as surely for their manifold senses—and the playful hesitations that come between.[2] We are made for words and seem destined for poems, giving ourselves over to their allure long before we can read. With them, we learn to new-name the world: in our first speech, we discover our world with words—some real, many imagined—that help us negotiate our lives from day to day. Indeed, words seem to discover *us* in childhood, finding out what they are capable of through the unexpected ways we play

with them. A word on children's lips can be an epiphany—for themselves, for those around them, perhaps even for language itself. This is one of the ways poems live.

Sadly, we seem to drift apart from such enjoyments as we grow older. Poems can come to seem a luxury at best and an irrelevance at worst, driven as we are by the duties of work and ensnared in what Wordsworth more than two centuries ago memorably described as "the world" that is

> . . . too much with us; late and soon,
> Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers.

The problem is clearly not a new one. It is part and parcel of a form of life Wordsworth sensed, even if he could not have imagined how it might develop over the centuries of industrialization and the recent emergence of the "information age." Yet he already knew the feeling we also experience in having "given our heart away, a sordid boon!"

A hundred years later, long before anyone could imagine the velocities of jet travel or the Internet's conveyance of information at the speed of light, the poet Rainer Maria Rilke gave us a way of naming our plight:

> My life is not this steep hour
> in which you see me hurrying so. . .[3]

Speed has come to measure the outward shape of our experience, but Rilke knew that it had little to do with our inner core where we come to know ourselves as "the stillness between two sounds," as he went on to put it. Even if the relentless tempo of our lives seems far removed from the temperament of our heart, our yearning for this sense of stillness suggests what philosophers and theologians have long named the soul.

As we grow older, the presence of young children reminds us of the purpose poetry might still hold for us. This happens in the quiet hours spent reading with them, or in those precious moments when we witness a child's gleeful discovery of words. In the ways they seem instinctively attuned to the delight that words in their instrumentality play in our lives, children help us feel again the marvel of how words bring us what the poet Jane Hirshfield

describes as "a doubled awareness,"[4] expanding our sense of reality beyond the literal sense. Fr. John-Julian suggests this when he suggests how vision moves in two directions and with two intensities at once:

> Eyes have I that see
> behind the eye,
> within the tree
> above the sky . . .[5]

This ability to see "behind the eye," to be carried by metaphor from the outer to the inner and back again, to imagine something as delightfully impossible as seeing "within the tree above the sky": all this is what makes poems essential for the vibrancy and sanctity of life.

Along such paths of *re*-cognition poetry ushers us into what the Australian poet Les Murray calls "wholespeak," in contrast to the "narrowspeak" of our pragmatic, flat, get-it-done world.[6] Poems guide us on our way through language's epiphanies, releasing us at least momentarily from our tutelage in the workaday realm of prose. Children remind us of this when we neglect it. Perhaps something of this lies behind Jesus's insistence that "the realm of God" belongs to children (e.g., Mk. 10:14) who seem to know naturally that we are made to question and wonder. For this, as the ancients knew, is the soul's primary work—and play. For the very world we inhabit, as the rabbi and poet Rami Shapiro puts it, "rests on the shores of wonder."[7]

This does not mean that poems belong primarily to children, even if they seem more immediately available to the startlements of language than we do who find ourselves often distraught by worry and distracted in our hurry. Despite all this, or perhaps precisely because of it, poems call out to us who seem "for everything . . . out of tune" (Wordsworth) in the ways they did when we were young, but with a difference: in adulthood, they awaken us to that rare and precious capacity Paul Ricœur spoke of as "second naiveté," the sense of wonder by which we discover again and again traces of the beauty that saturates our world. We need poems for this reason. They animate our soul, that part of the self beyond the reach of worldly ambition and outward achievement. They hold before us the dimension of spiritual experience

that abides in and beyond the pressures of "narrowspeak." They initiate us into mystery. Whether in the form of biblical Psalms, those ancient prayers that have long shaped our cultural memory, or in the lines of contemporary songwriters who lyricize our lives, poems are a living witness to the deeper and more enduring truths that we reach only through "wholespeak."

Why we turn from poems is hard to say. For some of us, poetry lost its lure during grade school classes, an experience of "disenchantment"[8] vividly embodied in the grim and pedantic school superintendent of *Hard Times* (1854), Mr. Gradgrind, whom Dickens describes as "a kind of cannon loaded to the muzzle with facts, and prepared to blow them clean out of the regions of childhood at one discharge." The opening lines from the first chapter set forth his philosophy of education in brutal form—anticipating "competence-based" strategies of teaching that dominate contemporary politics of school funding:

> Now, what I want is, Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else, and root out everything else. You can only form the minds of reasoning animals upon Facts; nothing else will ever be of any service to them.

A decade later, Lewis Carroll recalled a similar grim scenario in his portrait of the "Mock Turtle," who confesses to Alice that he had taken "the regular course" at school which was the one comprised of "Reeling and Writhing, of course, to begin with . . . and then the different branches of Arithmetic —Ambition, Distraction, Uglification, and Derision."[9] These are extreme examples of education gone wrong, to be sure, but they point to pressures that have ruined poetry for many.

For others who may have had gifted teachers inspired by the muses, poetry came to seem unnecessary if not irrelevant, for it "makes nothing happen," to recall W. H. Auden's oft quoted line in a memorial tribute to his friend and colleague W. B. Yeats. What he meant with this ironic disclaimer, though, points in another direction altogether as he goes on to speak of poetry's peculiar resilience:

> . . . it survives
> In the valley of its making where executives
> Would never want to tamper, flows on south
> From ranches of isolation and the busy griefs,
> Raw towns that we believe and die in; it survives,
> A way of happening, a mouth.[10]

Whatever our attitude toward it, poetry is stronger than the disdain Dickens and Carroll point to, enduring all this with a tenacious will. It remains with us, as Auden suggests, flowing on from the "ranches of isolation and the busy griefs" that so often narrow our lives. Poetry helps us hold onto something precious within us and between us, not only language with its revelatory surprise, but that more precious gift which Auden simply describes as "a way of happening."

What is this way of happening, and how might we speak of poetry's resilience in spite of all we do—or fail to do—in its presence? How do we discover in and through poems a sense of presence we need to find our way into a larger fullness of life?

In their wholespeak, poems offer us memorable words through which "deep calls to deep," as the ancient psalmist put it (Ps. 42:7). As with fiction poems are "not a version of the facts," as Jeanette Winterson has it, but "an entirely different way of seeing."[11] They offer us language lifted into song, even if we must often learn to listen patiently for this music in the startlements of metaphor and unexpected syntax. In such ways poems turn aside from the didactic and speak primarily through innuendo and allurement, preferring indirection to more frontal modes of speech and leading us through and beyond the facts along often meandering paths of the imagination. They play with our minds through the melodic appeal of language, with its relentless elasticity, depths of feeling, and wide reach. They remind us that we are creators, wordsmiths, each of us. They show us how the craft of speech and the art of imagining come together in the startling twists of metaphor.

In such ways as these poems initiate us into what the poet Rilke once called "heart-work," meaning the work of shaping our soul by attending

to the deep images rooted in our unconscious.[12] These come to us in what Rilke thought of as a turning-point, initiated within us when the turns of a line startle us into recognizing the abiding power of things past, when a phrase recalls shaping memories carried since childhood, when in moments of surprise we sense light breaking forth from the dark we carry within us. Poems initiate such turnings within us by attuning our minds through the practice of attention. They teach us, in their sometime refusal of immediate comprehension, the gain that comes to us through giving ourselves over to what Gerald May calls "the power of the slowing."[13] They invite us into the stillness that surrounds language, opening us to the inner experience of "re-play" by which words find the room they need to roam about within us. They enable us to discover an original naiveté, innocence, and curiosity we might have lost along the way.

Poems invite us to attend to the surfaces of things in order to sense traces there of a larger and deeper excess. They even reach for us in what Auden called "the deserts of the heart" so that we might "let the healing fountains start," touching us "in the prison of [our] days" in order to teach us, as free women and men, "how to praise."[14] They startle us into seeing how things have depths and complexities, how beauty waits for us in often unexpected places. They invite us, by means of the peculiar order of metaphor, to wander into truths often hiding in plain view. They usher us to familiar places which we had somehow "underseen" and beckon us to take in such truths more deeply, perhaps even daring with the poet to sing them into life.[15] They remind us what it means, against all the disappointments we face, to affirm life—and thus find the courage to speak "the barely sayable yes again, yes again, yes I will. Yes."[16]

Surely Edward Clarke is right in seeing how poems serve as "exercises in slow reading so that life is accelerated by intuition."[17] What sorts of intuition? This depends on the poet, the poem, and the reader who brings her capacities of thinking and feeling, of remembering and hoping—not solely in comprehending the *poem*, but rather in finding how it seeks to grasp us in the "poem" of our life. But this is to say that reading poems is a matter of work, requiring the quality of attentiveness that brings us to linger and ponder and wonder. These give rise to the intuitions poems awaken within us, accelerating and deepening our lives by such means.

Hilde Domin gathers this insight poignantly in a gem of a poem, with words of admonition and invitation:

> Don't grow weary
> but hold your hand out
> to wonder
> quietly
> as if to a bird.[18]

This is a poem to hold onto, pointing to what Socrates knew when he insisted that "wonder is the beginning of wisdom." Poems like this will not save us, but the wonder they engender might lift us, a little at least, from the plight of "narrowspeak." For we know our lives to be both fraught with reasons for anxiety and fear, on the one hand, and equally open, on the other, to the pulsing energies of spirit carried by the silent language of the heart. They give voice to what we might think of as "the shared poetic sense" we carry within us, one that "accelerates" our lives by intuitions we need in the face of suffering and injustice, cruelty and even death itself.[19]

What do poems do? Phyllis Tickle, one of the poets gathered in this collection, suggests that they have to do with educating of our souls. By this she meant something ancient yet utterly contemporary: the call to open ourselves to the spiritual core of our being on this earth. Such soulwork reminds us of the dignity and generosity that is our birthright, regardless of circumstance. It invites us into the wholeness that gathers the fragments of our lives, for "[i]n the best of cases, a single line of poetry can offer us a small infinity capable of holding together the irreconcilabilities of the human psyche," as a contemporary German poet recently put it.[20] Poems convey such intuitions against the internal pressures and those beyond us which threaten to overwhelm us altogether. Call it the work of informing the psyche, of upholding the heart. Call it the playful work of educating the soul. Call it wholespeak.

One of the joys of reading poems is that they give the eye and the ear and the mind, all engaged in deciphering their words and sounds and images, room to explore the world around us as well as the inner realm of the soul. Poems of the sort gathered in this collection rarely seem in a hurry to be

somewhere other than where they are—which happens to be in our midst. They center us in the work of the poet's attentiveness, but come to life beyond this in the margins and spaces, the gestures and silences of our own lives. In the midst of all this they summon us in a memorable line from Rilke to the one thing needed: "You must change your life."[21] Why poetry? Because in this "prose-flattened world"[22] we need them to regain our balance, to be opened in that fertile place within us where the mind knows to wander, where language leads us to wonder, where the heart gives us courage to desire this change and live into it.[23]

Poems depend on this courage and offer it to us in their own ways. Hilde Domin describes it eloquently in a little poem entitled "Poetry," calling it

> the not-word
>
> stretched out
> between
>
> word and word.[24]

We need this "not-word" (*Nicht-Wort*) so that words might find room they need to breathe, and we with them. Understood in this way, poems have little interest in instructing us. They seem intent on inviting us into the places "between" where we find the courage to change, to relinquish our need to control—our own life and that of others. They open us to a presence we might not otherwise know to expect. They accelerate our lives by intuition (Clarke), opening us to a transcendence that is beyond us, but one we find in our midst through the presence of the "other"—the stranger and the vagabond, the friend and the enemy alike.

Poems are to prose, to recall Paul Valéry's claim, as dancing is to walking. They quicken something essential within us, doing their work on the strength of this "not-word"—not only in the poem, but in the manifold texture of our lives. Here, they invite us to "read the book of [our] body," to "learn its language," for

the wisdom of the flesh
is deep as earth's dust,
high as heaven's animating wind. . . .
Trust it speaks truth
and soar on the strength of your scars.
Trust it speaks truth
and wear your wounds as wings.[25]

Poems invite us into such a wisdom where we find the room we need to grow. They open us to a truth "no one else can teach" us. They awaken us to "a sense of presence," as Scott Cairns has it,[26] suggesting traces of a transcendence held in what we think of as immanence. Poems, at least the strong ones that matter, gesture toward this sense, knowing more than they say and saying more than the words they utter. They reach us through intuition and imagination. They bring us language that knows to sing. They are like light which knows to come forth from the darkness.

The poems collected in these pages come from slow and persistent looking and listening, the essential constituencies of the poet's vocation. From such origins they suggest how we belong to a wider family than that of our private experience, calling us to an unmeasured reading vulnerable to a sense of presence as close to us as our breath and as unpredictable as the wind. Poems come from soulwork and accompany us in the patient and lifelong task of giving shape to our innermost self—which happens not once for all, rarely on when we expect it, and never on demand. It comes to us and takes us with it through the long work of learning to pay attention. At heart, poetry tutors us to live more deliberately. It helps us discern traces of a transcendence that abides among us in the ordinary. It suggests how we might open ourselves patiently and attentively to what *is*, for "we do not obtain the most precious gifts," Simone Weil insists, "by going in search of them, but by waiting for them."[27]

Poetry points to what Robert Frost described as "a clarification of life—not necessarily a great clarification, such as sects and cults are founded on, but in a momentary stay against confusion,"[28] accelerating our lives by such intuition. When they come to us, in or beyond the poem, they strike

us with the force of an epiphany, a word whose Greek root—*epiphanein*—signals a "showing forth" or "shining through" of such a sense.[29] At first glance this might seem tame given the unending barrage of "streaming" images that besiege us on every side. Yet precisely in such a time, Domin's words ring true: "We eat bread, but we live from radiance."[30] The work of opening ourselves to a sense of presence, of readying ourselves to catch some glimpse of radiance both in the bread we eat and in the hunger we feel is what the soulwork of poems is about.

This "shining through" of poems does not necessarily come to us in the course of things. Often it stands against the pressures of our often self-preoccupied lives. It is that occasional "showing forth" that invites us, as Anna Kamieńska put it, to shake off "the powder of hate from your soul" and create a space for something else:

> Into this space step alone
> and the tenderness of things will enfold you
> and lead you toward the dark
> as if you had lost worldly sight
>
> There whatever was named will return
> and stand in the radiance so you and I
> can find each other
> like two trees that were lost in fog[31]

A poem like this recalls for us, despite the poet's claim, that we never "step alone" into such a space as this, for the poem itself suggests that "the tenderness of things" enfolds us within the embrace of a larger community—with the poet, other readers, and those who live estranged from such "radiance." For what matters is not that we grasp the poem, but that it grasps *us*, offering us insight in our often clumsy or failed efforts to "find each other."

What is this "soulwork" in our lives? It has to do with how we learn to trust in making our way into "the tenderness of things," in the very midst of our lives. It recalls how the radiance that counts most is often found when we follow its lead "toward the dark / as if [we] had lost worldly sight." And,

when we find ourselves "stand[ing] in the radiance" through the lines of a poem, we discover how poems are able to cast a beam of light into the night, particularly in those times when we had lost our way.

In such ways poems work on us by means of a curriculum vastly different from that of Lewis Carroll's Mock Turtle, reaching for our hearts beyond the narrow realm of facts. They offer us an expansive sense capable of "transport[ing] us into previously unanticipatable comprehensions," as Jane Hirshfield puts it, luring us toward "the as-yet-undiscovered [which] brings an enlargement of life."[32] They quicken in us the conviction that we are not here simply to endure life, but to thrive—in the midst of, and if need be in spite of, the often dark circumstances that attend us. We might even take Rilke's lead in the credo he wrote on the poet's vocation:

> Oh say, poet, what do you do?
> —I praise.
> But what of the deadly and the monstrous?
> How do you keep going, how can you take it in?
> —I praise.
> And what of the nameless, the unnamed?
> How can you keep calling out, poet?
> —I praise.
> Where does it come from, this right you claim
> to be authentic in every guise and each mask?
> —I praise.
> And that the stillness and turbulence
> recognize you like star and storm?
> —Because I praise.[33]

That poems can teach us how to praise, as both Yeats and Rilke suggest, has to do with the ways they initiate us into "what's lasting," their testimony taking shape not in the words we utter, or not only in these, but in what comes "in the moments of our greatest concentration."[34] Often enough we sense this in the ways poems call us to "go forward in this change, leaving

and entering,"[35] discovering it through the generosity that summons us to a larger life in the midst of the pleasures and pains, failures and successes we face. We reveal it as we commit ourselves, in seasons of abundance and scarcity, to trusting "the as-yet-undiscovered" comprehensions capable of changing us by forming our souls. Our longing for this sense of presence is what invites us again and again to the threshold of change, for it is this sense that opens us to praise—against the countervailing evidence and despite the odds. It is an important guide for us in seeking our way by grace and gratitude, for our own sake and for the sake of the common good. For this, we need poems. And for this, poems need us.

Notes for the Introduction

1 Adam Zagajewski, "The Shabby and the Sublime," in *A Defense of Ardor*, trans. Clare Cavanagh (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2004), 37, 44.

2 Paul Valéry speaks of poetry as "the prolonged hesitation between sound and sense," a claim that plays on the close sounds in the French—i.e., "le son" (the sound) and "le sens" (the sense).

3 Rilke, 168. This and other citations, unless otherwise noted, refer to this volume.

4 Jane Hirshfield, "Strange Reaches, Impossibility, and Big Hidden Drawers," in *Ten Windows: How Great Poems Transform the World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2015), 287.

5 Fr. John-Julian, "Eyes Have I That See," 61.

6 Les Murray, "A Defense of Poetry," accessed August 9, 2016. http://lesmurray.org/defence.htm. He describes it as "the only whole thinking" in his poem "Poetry and Religion" (*The Daylight Moon: Poems* [New York: Persea Books, 1988]), 64.

7 Shapiro, "Wonder," 132.

8 This is generally the word used to render Max Weber's notion of *Entzauberung*, which he describes as the "condition" of modernity. It means, literally, the removal of magic, or a demystification of the natural world.

9 Lewis Carroll (Charles Lutwidge Dodgson), *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (London: Macmillan, 1865), ch. 9.

10 W. H. Auden, "In Memory of W. B. Yeats," in *Another Time* (New York: Random House, 1940), 248.

11 See Jeanette Winterson's essay, "Writer, Reader, Words", in *Art Objects: Essays on Ecstasy and Effrontery* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 28.

12 One finds this word in a poem written on the eve of war in 1914, which Rilke entitled "*Wendung*" or "Turning Point"; see Rainer Maria Rilke, *Die Gedichte* (Frankfurt a.M. and Leipzig: Insel Verlag, 2006), 612. For an English translation, see Rainer Maria Rilke, *Turning-Point: Miscellaneous Poems 1912–1926*, trans. by Michael Hamburger (London: Anvil Press Poetry, 2003), 53.

13 Gerald May, *The Wisdom of Wilderness: Experiencing the Healing Power of Nature* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2007), 15-25.

14 Auden, 248.

15 See here Phyllis Tickle, “Ordinary Song,” 23.

16 Mariani, “I Did Say Yes,” 34.

17 Edward Clarke, *The Vagabond Spirit of Poetry* (Winchester, UK: iff Books, 2014), 24.

18 Hilde Domin, “Nicht müde werden,” in *Sämtliche Gedichte*, ed. Nikola Herweg and Melanie Reinhold (Frankfurt a.M.: S. Fischer Verlag, 2009), 142 (my translation).

19 Lecoq, *Moving Body*, 46.

20 Durs Grünbein, “Salzburger Rede,” in *Warum schriftlos leben. Aufsätze* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 2003), 17 (my translation).

21 Rilke, 176.

22 The phrase is from Walter Brueggemann’s Lyman Beecher Lectures, published as *Finally Comes the Poet: Daring Speech for Proclamation* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1989), 1.

23 In the last of Rilke’s late *Sonnets to Orpheus*, he invites us to “go forth in this change, leaving and coming.” See below, 179.

24 Hilde Domin, “Lyrik,” in *Sämtliche Gedichte*, 113 (my translation).

25 Thurston, “The Sixth Day,” 84.

26 Cairns, “Sacred Time,” p. 2. Charles Taylor speaks of this as a “sense of fullness”; see *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 5.

27 Simone Weil, *Waiting for God*, trans. Emma Craufurd (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1951), 112.

28 Robert Frost, “The Figure a Poem Makes,” in *Collected Poems, Prose, and Plays* (New York: Library of America, 1995), 777.

29 On this theme and its relation to the arts, see George Steiner, *Real Presences* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 226ff.

30 The phrase echoes the ancient Hebrew text Jesus invoked in the wilderness (see Matt. 4:1–4, and Deut. 8:3). Hilde Domin, “Die Heiligen,” in *Nur eine Rose als Stütze. Gedichte* (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer Verlag, 1994), 30 (my translation).

31 Kamieńska, “On The Threshold of the Poem,” xxix.

32 Jane Hirshfield, *Hiddenness, Uncertainty, Surprise: Three Generative Energies of Poetry* (Newcastle: Bloodaxe Books, 2008), 45, 49–50.

33 Rilke, 180.

34 Zagajewski, 44.

35 Rilke, 179.