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Amaranth

a journal of food writing and art

featuring:

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Hoag

Mark
Fleisher

Alexis
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Description

Amaranth Journal of Food Writing and Art is a digital journal that aims to connect a global community of food writers, artists, design thinkers, and culinary storytellers through sensitive storytelling. It publishes a wide range of creative endeavors and assemblages on food such as food stories, memoirs, vignettes, poems, photo essays, drawings, and other illustrative arts.

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EDITOR'S LETTER

Autumn, 2022 [Volume 1, Issue 1]

Dear Readers,

The October sky is a brilliant cerulean blue and the air outside is turning crisper. The season of ripeness is here.

On behalf of my co-founders Sujoy Sarkar and Vidya Nadiger, I am delighted to announce the inaugural issue [Volume 1, Issue 1] of **Amaranth Journal of Food Writing and Art**.

This issue brings together tales of new hopes and heartbreaks, a serendipitous encounter, memories of an ancient orchard, an ocean heirloom most precious, enigmatic recipes, wonder in the ordinary, bewitching illuminations, and feasts that nourish the soul.

From this appetizing assemblage of food writing and art, we have chosen three compositions (one from each section: Prose, Poetry, and Art) for having depicted — with rich inventiveness and restrained flourish — a deep awareness of humankind's dynamic relationship with food.

What we lose to the passing years often comes back to us unannounced. Christina Hoag's memoir "Cream: Unpacking a Suitcase of Memory" is a sensitive portrayal of the nostalgic yearnings for a long-lost flavor and its fortuitous rediscovery in another time and place.

Mark Fleisher's poem "Not All Syrups are Created Equal" spoons in delicate measures of ardor, tenderness, and quiet humor to a culinary adventure endeavored in the wee hours of the morning. Life, as it turns out, reserves its riches for those that take to the road. Wisdom eludes those that don't. "From the Land of Fruit and Vegetables: Photo Collages by Alexis Krasilovsky" is a playful experiment with perspectives, gently leading us to the surprisingly scrumptious core of the familiar.

Whether as a source of sustenance or delight, food connects us all. Be it the Mexican Alegría or the Icelandic Kjötsúpa, the Viennese Schnitzel or the Tripuran Shidol, the Sicilian Arancini or the Japanese Narazuke, food speaks the common language of humanity. It tells a zillion stories of places and people far and near.

If we have been successful, even by a humble measure, in bringing some of those stories together on these pages, we shall consider our job done.


We welcome you to our Autumn feast. Here's to the "season of mellow fruitfulness!"

Bon Appétit!

Satarupa Sinha Ray

Founder & Managing Editor

Amaranth Journal of Food Writing and Art

PROSE

Cream: Unpacking a Suitcase of Memory

Christina Hoag

Cream. The word takes me back to a place where spray-can cream didn't exist, when people would have shuddered at the paragraph of unpronounceable ingredients on labels of Fat-Free Cool Whip, when calories, carbs and cholesterol were medical terms.

That was in New Zealand, where I was born and lived as a child. The thing I still miss to this day about New Zealand, a land of dairy where no one dreamt of a diet deprived of copious amounts of butter, milk, and cheese from grass-engorged cows, is cream.

When I was little, I would skip to the gate in the morning to pick up the two pints of milk the milkman delivered at dawn. The glass bottles would already be perspiring in the saffron glow of the rising sun. Under the bottles' silver-foil lids, which us kids would flatten into make-believe coins, rested a plug of ivory cream on top of the milk. I eyed that cream jealously because I knew it would be squabbled over at the breakfast table with my sister and brother. There was nothing as grand as eating cornflakes in cream, letting that liquid ribbon of satin glide over the tongue.

My mother took cream with her coffee; it was plain old milk with tea. Every morning she dropped a whipped whiff into her cup along with spoonfuls of brown sugar. The cream would melt into a layer of floating foam that would leave her with a light mustache when she sipped. She would flick her upper lip clean with the tip of her tongue as she lowered her cup to its waiting saucer.

Cream was the companion of all desserts, so a bowl of whipped cream was a *de rigueur* item in the fridge, but it took work. I'd have to stand on a chair to reach the kitchen counter, apron tied under my armpits, and toss a dash of vanilla and a splash of sugar into the bowl. Then I whipped the liquid cream with a metal hand beater. I churned the little wooden handle round and round and round until my arm muscles ached and the liquid miraculously turned into a snowy cloud. My reward was licking the beater clean.

Whipping cream was a major production when we visited my aunts in the South Island. They ordered several pints of milk and half a pint of cream from the milkman every day, making a veritable industry of baking the cakes, puddings desserts to go with it — trifles and pavlovas.

For afternoon tea, which was rolled into the front room on a trolley, a bowl of cream sat on a lace doily next to a teapot clad in a hand-knit tea cozy to keep it hot. I'd smother oven-fresh scones with homemade jam — redcurrant, gooseberry, raspberry, whatever was the recent season's garden harvest — and plop a generous spoonful of cream on top. Or we might have a Victoria sandwich

cake, where jam and cream were layered to create the filling between the two discs of sponge. Biting into a slice was tricky. Cream and jam would ooze out and smear over my cheeks. I'd have to hastily catch the overspill from the slice with a curl of my tongue before it dropped, but I wasn't always on time. A scrubbing at the sink was usually in order afterward.

Sometimes we would forego the whipping and simply pour liquid cream from a jug on to a plateful of strawberries or raspberries, but first we had to pick the fruit. My aunt on the sheep farm would dispatch us, equipped with bowls as bottomless as our bellies, to the raspberry patch outside her back door. We delved into the thicket of canes and plucked the raspberries until our fingers and mouths ran bloody with scarlet juice and our tummies ached. Later, we piled the raspberries into our dishes with a dusting of confectioner's sugar and emptied the cream jug over them, making the berries look like pebbles in a pond.

I was visiting my sister in Washington State recently and we took a run to the grocery store to pick up last-minute ingredients for dinner. As we surveyed the dairy case, our eyes set upon it at the same time. Cream. We looked at each other, then my sister seized the cream and tossed it in the basket. When we got home, I whipped it with a hand beater, and we ate it with cherry pie my sister had made. The cream was fine but, of course, it wasn't the same.

One of the best things about moving countries has been discovering new things, often foods, and one of the saddest is not being able to take those things with me. Hope builds when the lost beloved item is re-encountered, but disappointment is inevitable. It's not the item itself that I miss but the surrounding environment, the emotions of the moment, the whole experience that encompasses it. Missing cream, I realized, was really about missing my aunts, the milkman delivering glass bottles of milk, eating breakfast with my brother and sister, seeing my mother happy. It was about missing a childhood distant in time and geography.

All I can do now is shape new experiences out of old. Cherry pie with whipped cream as the snow flurries outside in the chilled air.



Christina Hoag is the author of novels *Law of the Jungle*, *The Blood Room*, *Girl on the Brink* and *Skin of Tattoos*. She has also co-authored *Peace in the Hood: Working with Gang Members to End the Violence*. A former journalist and foreign correspondent in Latin America, she has written for Time, Business Week, The New York Times and Financial Times, among other media. Her short stories and essays have been published

in numerous literary reviews, including *Toasted Cheese*, *Lunch Ticket* and *Shooter*, and have won several awards. More information about her could be found on her website: <https://www.christinahoag.com>.

Maintanosalata and Morning People

Steven Magstadt

The ends of good, crusty loaves of bread get a bad rap. They tend to go sad. But not on the Greek Island of Syros.

My time on the island was many things, but since I was cooking for a living at the time it was also deliberately about food, and food starts early in Greece. The function of Greek food is to bring people together, fingers and utensils bumping in and out of the same dishes, eyes meeting in pleasure over the same bite in two mouths at the same time. More than any other food I'd experienced to that point in my life, Greek food eaten with Greek people was about love.

It was the kind of love that required only the best ingredients, carefully prepared. It was finding herbs and caper berries when and where you found them, and laying them next to vegetables that had been left growing in the garden until they were too full of warm earth and happy sunshine to travel much farther than the kitchen table. This kind of love was best made early in the morning so things could slowly roast, simmer, char, and marinate into edible riches by lunchtime.

Greece taught me that self-proclaimed morning people are not what they think they are, and it is also where I recognized that being a morning person is more about place than time of day.

Morning People who pride themselves on being Morning People are very nearly the worst. They are right up there with tax audits, dentists' visits, and raisins where no one warned you raisins would be. These people aren't saying they love mornings because mornings are beautiful. They aren't telling you they are Morning People because they found mornings are where they could hold space for themselves against the rest of their coming day.

Most of them are telling you they are Morning People because they think being awake before you have somehow made them superior. It didn't. It just made them more boring than they already were. I have a theory that the more often they proclaim their Morning Person-ness, the more likely that they'll be left alone with their useless sunrises and unannounced raisins until they become the sort of creatures that small children avoid and cats turn their backs on.

The exceptions to my theory are the souls who see a happened-upon sunrise as the quiet moment in every day that forgives them for yesterday, and energizes them to try again today. I have only felt this way about early mornings a few times, and in a few places, in my life. These always happened to be near water.

I woke with the sun on my first morning in Syros before my fellow travelers were stirring, and headed down the warm, smooth marble stairs of our hotel on Vari Beach. I remember pausing on my way to the hotel kitchen when I saw the water shimmering with soft buttery yellow light right outside our door.

(There is a part of us that doesn't need words but just knows that something is special. People like to say it is the heart that knows these things, but they never take the trouble to explain why it always seems to get caught in the throat to make us pay attention.)

It was Sophie, her uncle, and myself in the kitchen that morning. We munched on slivers of sharp cheese, bread grilled with olive oil & drizzled with honey, apples, and thick, black coffee as we started a massive pot of soup. In went wine, root vegetables, onions, lemons, bunches of oregano, and fish heads. Sophie's uncle would later make rice to go with this soup, and swore with a raffish wink that it could cure any hangover — as long as you also drank wine with it.

Eggplants were stuffed with rice, feta and ground lamb. Grape leaves were rolled. Sauces were prepped, fritter batters made and laid aside to chill. Tiny fish, caught by net from the bay after drinks and giggles late the previous night, were tossed in flour and salt for frying whole. The potatoes that are a staple in many Greek meals were prepared for roasting. Giant white beans were turned into a savory, creamy almost-pâté.

Dozens of dishes and meze were begun before the village woke for breakfast. It was a normal morning of prep for what would be a very busy taverna later in the day; it was the only way to offer so many choices.

The dining room at the Hotel Kamelo was one of those special places that existed between things. It felt like it had once been a porch outside the kitchen which had been enclosed with floor-to-ceiling windows and doors. It was bounded by the kitchen on one side and by the sand of Vari Beach on the other. When the front windows were open the room filled with the sighs of lapping water, and you could see all the way across the bay to where the stony hills were speckled with white-washed houses so it looked as if sugar cubes had been randomly tossed onto a landscape of rising bread dough.

There were American and British expats that I only saw in the dining room on these early mornings. They never said they were Morning People. It was just understood as we breakfasted (or second breakfasted like a Hobbit if you were me) that we were awake because we felt incredibly lucky to be present and alive.

I was sitting at a table making notes on the morning's cooking, and there was only one other person in the room with me. She was tallish, and slender in a bony way, with high cheek bones. Her

hair was not yet entirely gray, but had clearly committed to that direction. She had the freckled complexion of someone who loved the sun and didn't care who saw, and the lines around her blue eyes indicated she didn't spend too much time being serious.

We began to chat about what I was doing and I realized, as she spoke and gestured across the bay to show where she and her husband lived, that she was British. She explained that a fair number of British expats, who had once come here for a vacation, now lived on the island. They had kept coming, and coming, and coming because the sea sparkled with flecks of mica, and there were herbs and capers among the rocks in the hills, and it was possible to rent a little house with the sun on its face for so much less than a dark apartment in wetter, grayer places. They came for a visit and decided to never leave.

She asked me if I had ever tried something she called Syros Salad, and I said no. She started to tell me about a dish made of parsley with bread crumbs, or sometimes potato, when Sophie came out with what must've been the woman's regular order of coffee and a sweet at that time every day.

The woman smiled, and urged Sophie to tell me about the salad, but Sophie said it was nothing special. The British woman persisted, so later that day Sophie and I sipped coffee in the kitchen, and made the dish.

Sophie's salad was roughly equal parts parsley and bread finely chopped and added to onion, garlic, capers, lemon juice, wine, and olive oil. It cleansed between sharp liquors, and was a perfect side to almost everything. It was tart, silky, and savory. It tasted like it came from a happy place.

It is the thing I save all my bread ends for, and it is a transportive treat for myself and the friends I share it with.

Every time I make any version of this simple recipe, I am back on Syros with its beautiful Neoclassical architecture, gracefully tumbling upward from the sea to the sister churches on the top of its two hills that symbolized differences that somehow learned to live peaceably. This was the place where the men danced slowly, dramatically, and proudly in an undulating line after dinner because they could — because they were free. It was the place of nocturnal net fishing, and raki-drinking, and hangover fish soup making days that began with mornings worth seeing.

They are summed up in each bite of Maintanosalata, and there are no sad endings in that — not even for old bread.



Steven Magstadt was born in Michigan, and grew up largely in Texas with a brief period in Norway while regularly spending time in California and South Dakota. He jokes that he spent a lot of his growing up in a van wondering if he was there yet. Along the way he read a lot, and got into the habit of trying to capture the feelings within favorite moments by writing them down or photographing them before they were gone.

Ammachi and Onions

Parvathy Menon

White. Yellow. Purple. I have tried 'em all — cutting, chopping, crushing. But no, the tears won't come.

When I was five or six, I'd sit for hours on the kitchen floor watching my grandma — my Ammachi, as I lovingly called her — weep profusely as she peeled and sliced onions for the Varutharacha mutton curry she cooked and sold at twenty-five rupees a plate. Back in those days she used to run a small roadside eatery, the kind of place frequented by matter-of-fact men who took the business of eating seriously.

Ammachi was a tough woman with broad shoulders, strong limbs, and a booming voice. She swore freely. She was not the kind of person to get upset easily. Yet, the puny onions held sway over her — they made her weep out her eyes every single morning.

I might have been a frail sickly child, but onions had never had much luck with me. Or it may be that — for some reason — we regarded each other with a quiet reverence that I was immune to the lachrymatory factor. Whatever it was, it made me feel special in a world of teary-eyed onion peelers.

I've always found the circle-within-circle structure of the onion fascinating. Peeling an onion was like working one's way through the beguiling, concentric encapsulation to get to the bottom of an unfathomable mystery. Perhaps, the circles were finite but the mystery multiplied with the falling away of each compact layer.

Did Ammachi think of onions in a similar way? I wonder, to this day, if the purple bulbs made way for emotions she'd otherwise found difficult to express. Five sons dead; the sixth, committed to an asylum. A husband who never returned from the sea. Crops destroyed by floodwater.

Yes, Ammachi was a tough woman with broad shoulders, strong limbs, and a booming voice. Yes, she swore freely. Yes, she didn't seem to be the kind of person who got upset easily. Only onions could make her cry.



Parvathy Menon is a writer with roots in Alappuzha, Delhi, and Pune. She enjoys trekking in the mountains and writing about nature, people, food, and cities.

Ratner's

Perri Chasin

It was nearly noon and I was finally savoring my first cup of Italian roast. I'd spent the morning scouring the New York Times in search of death notices for *Final Curtain*, my program that had just been greenlit by KCRW, the local National Public Radio station. The upcoming series, due to debut in a month, was credited as "...North America's first obituary only radio program..." Basically, the show would celebrate the lives of the recently deceased; people whose names you didn't recognize but should have. Holding the mug with both hands, I took a few sips, then returned to the paper. That's when I read Harold Harmatz had died.

Harmatz owned Ratner's, the Lower East Side Manhattan eatery that his father, Jacob and uncle Alex opened in 1905. Allegedly, Jacob and his brother-in-law Alex Ratner flipped a coin to decide whose name would be on the sign. Alex won.

Open 24 hours a day, the dairy restaurant boasted two locations, Ratner's on Delancey Street and a second location near the Second Avenue Yiddish theaters. Catering to the tastes of European immigrants who'd settled in lower Manhattan, in its early years one could rub elbows with stars of the Yiddish Theatre and Broadway including Al Jolson, Fanny Brice and Groucho Marx. Then, in the 1940's, patrons included Bugsy Siegel and Meyer Lansky – members of the Jewish mafia. Purportedly, Lansky was partial to the cheese blintzes as was Nelson Rockefeller, New York's blue-blooded governor.

I was five when my parents began taking me to Ratner's. Mom would dress me, buckle my Mary Janes then place me on the bed where I watched her get ready. Dressing carefully, she'd take her seat at the vanity table to braid her thick, waist length, flaming red hair she'd wrap around her head like a crown. Once coiffed, mom flawlessly applied crimson lipstick and blotted her lips before reaching for her leather handbag and white gloves.

From my perch, I could see my father run a brush through his blond hair in front of the bathroom mirror. With his shirt collar turned up, he'd wind, then drape, the wider end of his tie into a perfect Windsor knot, centering it before lowering the collar. Exiting the bathroom, dad would reach into the top drawer of the dresser for a clean, neatly folded, white handkerchief which he'd place into his right trouser pocket before donning and buttoning his suit jacket.

Exiting our apartment, each parent would take one of my hands and we'd head for the subway trip into Manhattan. At the station, dad handed mom a fifteen-cent token she'd insert into the turnstile. Then, lifting me into his arms, he'd insert his.

Trains ran less frequently on weekends so invariably we'd wait on the platform, but once onboard, it was just a few stops to our destination. At our stop, we three would ascend the stairs, adjusting our eyes as the noontime sunlight welcomed us. A parent on either side, my blonde curls bouncing, I jounced the city's blocks toward the large, red, neon signage that signaled our arrival.

Ratner's was a family-run institution, a place where Yiddish was the Lingua Franca and one was treated to the comforting euphony of all manner of European accents. Being a kosher dairy restaurant warranted their dishes were prepared with vast amounts of clarified butter years before Julia Child declared, "With enough butter, anything is good".

Upon entering, a mouthwatering savory aroma overtook us. Waiting to be seated, we were treated to a parade of white shirted, black tied, aproned waiters, some of whom had worked there for decades. Carrying huge trays of meatless Jewish comfort food, they bobbed and weaved, never dropping a plate, carefully navigating the narrow spaces between tables in what appeared to be a fairly intricate choreography.

Once seated, a mesh metal breadbasket was placed in the center of the table containing an assortment of hot baked goods swaddled by a serviette. Immediately, I'd reach out to free an onion roll from its cloth restraint. Despite the inviting mound of fresh from the oven salt sticks and challah rolls, Ratner's, for me, was synonymous with onion rolls. These were little masterpieces, pinwheel shaped gems that guaranteed a mouthful of buttery baked onions in every bite. Invariably, by the time the waiter returned with pats of cold butter and glasses of water, several onion rolls were devoured.

Like Lansky and Rockefeller, my father typically ordered the cheese blintzes, thin crepe-like pancakes wrapped around pillows of a white farmer cheese medley of egg yolks, sugar and vanilla lightly fried in clarified butter. They were soft, rich, fluffy clouds of deliciousness served warm and a mainstay at Ratner's. Dad liked his with generous dollops of cool, thick, tangy sour cream.

Mom preferred the potato soup, an equally rich creation of a clarified butter and flour roux to which Ratner's added boiled potatoes, baked onions and broth which they blended into a thick, creamy consistency.

I was perfectly content with just the seemingly never-ending breadbaskets and butter. In between mouthfuls of onion roll, my father would feed me a bite of his cheese blintz or a spoonful of my mother's potato soup.

Happiness reigned on these weekend outings. I was doted on, the sole recipient of my parents' undivided love and attention.

A few years later, when my brother was born, our excursions into the city waned. We'd frequent Ratner's less and less. Then, when our family of four grew to five, those special trips with mom and dad ceased entirely and I lost track of Ratner's.

A secular renewal of the Lower East Side had been occurring for years. By and by, the old clientele was gone. Then, in the late 1960's, the neighborhood experienced a resurgence when impresario Bill Graham opened the Fillmore East on Second Avenue, just doors from Ratner's. Now known as the East Village, the Ratner's of my childhood became a late-night hangout for young, tie-dyed, bell-bottom clad, long-haired patrons. Still open 24 hours, these diners touched down in the early morning hours after hearing some of the biggest names in rock. But the good times weren't to last. The Fillmore closed four years later and dealt a death knell to the Second Avenue Ratner's.

Meanwhile, the Delancey Street location struggled as gentrification continued to cast its wide net over the neighborhood. Tastes changed. Despite numerous attempts by the family to carry on, Ratner's permanently shuttered its doors in 2002.

Two years later, as I read Harmatz' obituary in the *Grey Lady*, I was transported back to those halcyon days, walking hand in hand with my late parents on the streets of New York's Lower East Side.

Filled with nostalgia, lamenting life's impermanence, I wanted to acknowledge Harold Harmatz publicly and show my gratitude. It took his passing to release a cache of precious sensory souvenirs.

Taking a final sip of my morning brew, my face broke into a smile. I would celebrate him on *Final Curtain*.

And, a month later, I did!



Perri Chasin is a former television and radio writer/producer. She has served as senior news producer for KCOP-News 13, entertainment series and specials for The Disney Channel, UPN, KNBC, CNBC, Financial News Network and KCRW, a National Public Radio station. She has additionally produced live events including the first benefit concert for National Public Radio west of the beltway which featured performances by Linda Ronstadt, Dudley Moore and Crosby, Stills & Nash. She co-produced *From Sea to Shining Sea: The Story of Hands across America*, a documentary that chronicled the largest domestic gathering that garnered millions of dollars in the fight against hunger and homelessness. A former professor at St. John's University and lecturer at New York University, Ms. Chasin is currently Adjunct Associate Professor at Otis College of Art and Design. In addition to memoir, she writes short fiction as well as fantasy fiction for young children (ages three to five).

Jellybeans

Tanya Bellehumeur-Allatt

Before the tumour, before the coughing fits, before his esophagus constricted and he was unable to swallow anything — even water — my father ate jellybeans by the handful.

He kept a bowl of them on the dining room buffet. At Christmastime, he switched the jellies for assorted hard candies. He ordered them from a specialty shop in the neighbouring city, where he was a preferred customer with a loyalty card.

In case of candy cravings on the road, he kept a supply of peppermints in the console of his truck. During the Valentine's Day blizzard of 2007, on his way to pick up my mother at the hospice where she worked, my father ate all the remaining peppermints in his bag while he waited five hours in the traffic.

But last spring, when the tumour manifested and caused him to choke on his food, the candies were among the first things to go, along with raw fruits and vegetables, nuts, seeds and fibrous meats like beef and lobster.

My father, the epicurean, still ate three meals a day, but they grew smaller. My mother's finely curated vegetable dishes and meat courses had to be separately pureed and arranged on his plate. Every mouthful of food, once masticated, was gingerly swallowed. As the months went on, he was forced to eliminate the evening meal. The second to go was lunch. By the end of summer, the only food he could manage was half a banana at breakfast, with a slice of toast. Each attempt to eat was a long, slow, painful process, frequently interrupted by episodes of coughing and choking.

He and my mother lost significant amounts of weight. He — because he could not consume food; she — because she was too sorrowful. My father was determined to remain autonomous for as long as he could. I watched the process unfold, feeling powerless to intervene.

He eventually lost the ability to swallow even the softest things, until one day his esophagus was too constricted to let in even a thimbleful of water. He insisted on driving himself to the hospital. When he arrived, he was badly dehydrated. The emergency-room nurse administered liquids intravenously and assigned him a bed.

That night, I made supper for my mother, brought it down to her house, served it to her on a tray and sat next to her in the living room while she ate. It had been a long time, she said, since she'd eaten solid food.

We discussed my father's situation. For weeks, we'd been awaiting the results of his PET scan, the imaging test that would determine the type of cancer he had. We knew that the tumour was pressing on the bronchial tubes and the aorta in a tricky, congested place that made it impossible to remove by surgical means. What we didn't know was where it was rooted and whether it was obstructing the oesophagus from the inside or the outside.

The next morning, the surgeons would install a port in my father's chest, below his shoulder, for intravenous chemotherapy infusions. Maman showed me a YouTube video that explained the process. In her ten years of hospice care, she'd tended to hundreds of cancer patients and had seen these ports many times.

She was hoping for a diagnosis of lung or bronchial cancer — something treatable. The worst possible outcome was esophageal cancer. Her voice broke as she tried to explain. Esophageal cancer is fatal.

We would know what we were up against in the afternoon, when the oncologist phoned with the results of the scan. Given the upsurge of Covid-19 in our area, the doctor preferred to give the information over telephone rather than in person.

I asked my mother if I could join them at the hospital when the call came in. I could take notes. My father was hard of hearing and might need help to decipher the doctor's words.

Next morning, my mother called with an invitation to see her at the hospital. My father had had his operation and was resting in his room. The surgeons had inserted a tube in his nose that reached directly into his stomach. He would need to take all his nourishment that way until the chemotherapy and radiation melted the tumour.

My parents — two halves of a whole — so rarely let me into their almost sixty-year symbiosis. I was grateful to shoulder their pain with them, if only for a short time. But I dreaded seeing my father in his hospital gown, with the feeding tube. I drove across the city feeling jittery; my nerves frayed as if I'd had too much caffeine.

In the hospital's surgical unit, the nurses were transferring a second, quite corpulent man to the bed adjacent to my father's. They wanted me to stay in the hallway until they'd gotten him off the gurney. I stood outside the room, reading my father's name over and over on the tiny slip of paper attached to the door.

I was afraid I might cry and embarrass him. But my parents were expecting me. They'd given my number to the oncologist. Once the newcomer had settled down in his bed, I forced myself to push the door open and enter the room. My mother sat on a metal chair in the corner, next to the

window, with its abysmal view of the hospital roof and the gray October sky. She looked smaller than the day before, and paler, with skin to match her white hair.

My father lay on the bed under a thin blanket. His pupils were still dilated from the anaesthetic, but he was freshly shaven. My mother must have helped him prepare for my visit.

He took my face in both hands and kissed my cheek as if I were a dinner guest in his home, thanking me for coming. He claimed his voice was altered though it sounded the same to me, comforting in its familiarity.

The tube was a distraction, but not as offensive or intrusive as I had feared. My father showed me the milkshake the doctors had prescribed. It came in a cardboard carton and had all the nutrients needed to keep him alive. The fact that it was vanilla-flavoured was immaterial since it made no difference to his taste buds. He demonstrated how he pumped it into his nose. He would repeat the process five times a day, rinsing the tube after every meal so that he could use it for his water intake. For now, he was on the intravenous drip. His body was still severely dehydrated; the doctors said he'd waited too long to get to the hospital.

Across the room, the corpulent man shifted and moaned, his doughy body overlarge for the narrow bed. He was nothing like my stoic father, who disdained any form of weakness.

I set up my cell phone on the hospital bed along with a pad of legal paper and a pen. My father, ever the logistician, nodded his appreciation.

While waiting for the phone to ring, I asked my father a question about military ranks, related to some research I was doing for my new book. He launched into a complex answer, reaching back into his thirty-year career in the Canadian Armed Forces. The mint green walls, the antiseptic hospital smell, the metal bed and wires and resuscitation equipment fell away. He was no longer a cancer patient in a thin hospital-issued nightgown. He was Rtd. Lieutenant-Colonel J.E.D. Bellehumeur. His face took on new colour as he traveled to a nobler place in his mind.

Lunchtime came and went as did teatime. When my father excused himself to use the restroom, I shared a few chocolates from my purse with my mother. I couldn't bear to eat anything in front of him.

We were expecting the call at 3 p.m., but it was almost suppertime when the doctor finally called in with his grim news. His voice was tinny, as disinterested as if he were making his grocery order. *Esophageal cancer*, I wrote on the bright yellow legal pad. Next to that: *Five weeks radiation and chemotherapy*.

My mother's shoulders curled forward.

“You should head home now,” my father said. The hospital was half an hour from our village and my father, ever solicitous for my mother’s safety, didn’t want her to drive in the dark. The days were already getting shorter, leaning into winter.

We were reluctant to leave him alone with the news, but he insisted. “I’ll be eating again by Christmas,” he said as Maman and I buttoned our coats. “Turkey and cranberries, mashed potatoes covered in gravy. Butter tarts with whipped cream. A little less than three months. Well worth the wait.”



Tanya Bellehumeur-Allatt is the author of the critically acclaimed *Peacekeeper’s Daughter: A Middle East Memoir* (ThistleDown, 2021), which was a finalist for the Quebec Writer’s Federation Mavis Gallant Award for Nonfiction. Her debut poetry collection *Chaos Theories of Goodness* was released with Shoreline Press in June 2022. Tanya’s fiction, essays and poems have been published in *Best Canadian Essays* 2015 and 2019, *The New Quarterly*, *Grain*, *EVENT*, *Prairie Fire*, *Malabat Review*, *subTerrain*, *carte blanche*, *Antigonish Review*, *Room*, *Queens Quarterly*, *BigCityLit*, *Syncopation*, *The Masters Review Anthology*, *Dalhousie Review* (forthcoming) and *The Toronto Star*. Her work has been nominated for several National

Magazine Awards in the One-of-a-Kind Storytelling and Personal Journalism categories. Tanya holds an MA from McGill University and an MFA in Creative Writing from UBC. More about Tanya’s writing can be found here: <https://tanyaallattbellehumeur.com/>



Not All Syrups are Created Equal

Mark Fleisher

Neither Nabisco nor Keebler
could satisfy my yen for
gingerbread cookies for the time
read 2:15 a.m. and I could
not wait for stores to open.

I headed home from my
6 to 2 shift putting the sports pages
together, squeezing in every
baseball box and West Coast score.

I poured myself a strong one –
a remnant of my recent war –
and Jack D and I mulled over
ingredients needed to satisfy
my early morning desire.

Hauling out *Joy of Cooking* –
a gift from mom celebrating
my first apartment –
I found what seemed
a simple easy-to-make recipe.

Roll call of ingredients:

Flour – here

Brown sugar – here

Butter – here

Baking soda – here

Ginger – here

Cinnamon – here
Cloves – here
Molasses – (silence)
Molasses – Betty Crocker,
we have a problem

At 2:30 in the a.m.
I am not about to knock
on a neighbor's door asking
to borrow a cup of molasses.
After a rapid reconnaissance mission,
I discovered an amber flagon
of 100 percent pure maple syrup
imported, no less, from Vermont.
Surely, I thought, maple syrup
and molasses are at least
first cousins if not siblings.

Everything dumped into the mixing bowl,
whisked till my right wrist said enough,
a lump-free cookie batter achieved
and we've reached the home stretch.

Merely spoon dollops of batter
onto a cookie sheet and...
Cookie sheet? Guess Mom
forgot the cookie sheet
OK, we lucked out with
maple syrup, so there must be
a substitute for the cookie sheet.

My otherwise modest oven
included a broiler pan,

perfect, I thought, for this
cookie-making adventure.

Punch in the requisite
temperature, set the timer,
array healthy spoonfuls
of smooth-as-silk batter
upon the broiler pan,
carefully placing it all
on the middle rack.

And wait...

My anticipation heightened
as the aroma of ginger wafted
through my meager digs before
the long-awaited ding sounded –

Opening the oven door,
I carefully removed the pan,
setting it atop the stove for
my inspection – and the result --

Apparently, the maple syrup
bound together all the other ingredients,
creating a single sheet of
the cookie version of the
Big Rock Candy Mountain,
clearly more interesting
to a geologist than a lover
of gingerbread cookies.

Adding insult to injury were
the broiler pan's undulations,

reminiscent of the rolling hills
of some place or another.

Lessons learned:

- * It's not called a broiler pan for nothing
and
- * All syrups are not created equal.



After a more than 20-year career as a newspaper reporter and editor, **Mark Fleisher** turned to poetry in 2011 and has since published four books and collaborated on a fifth. His work has appeared in numerous online and print anthologies in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, India, Kenya and Nigeria. Fleisher earned a journalism degree from Ohio University. His service in the United States Air Force included a year in Vietnam as a combat news reporter. The Brooklyn, New York native now lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico with his wife, Merle Pokempner, a retired art therapist.

Outside Stangl's Bakery circa 1949

Donnarkevic

Outside Stangl's Bakery
on Merchant Street, snow
crests on the brim
of a hatted man who looks
me up and down,
like fresh goods on display,
reminding me of my husband
who walked back and forth
in front of my parents' house,
that summer, a slice of honey-spice cake.
He approached me on the porch steps,
asked for a date, the movies,
the popcorn stale as day-old rye,
Hepburn & Tracy in *Adam's Rib*,
he, making sure I knew
who would wear the pants
he could not keep on
and Momma warned me,
her words brined with Polish,
robak pełzający w rękawie,
a bug crawling up my sleeve,
but I brushed her off.
At eighteen, I understood
to make my escape
I would deliver children
like milk bottles, wear noir lipstick

the color of the red take-a-number
dispenser at Stangl's bakery,
and brush the husband's wool felt Fedora
when crested with snow.

Supper for the Dead

The table set; bone china used
only for special occasions,
the smell of chicken *paprikash*,
the taste of Mazovian cabernet,
again, only for special occasions,
the family murmuring to seats,
their usual places at the table
inherited from dead grandparents,
spirits at their usual places,
Baci in the kitchen bringing out *mizéria*,
cucumbers in sour cream,
Dziadzi, at the head of the table
unfolding a napkin, tapping a knife
on a wine glass signaling grace.
But this generation lacks grace,
so, they chew in silence, watch
their children wait for dessert,
and wonder if they will gather
years from now like birds
expecting to be fed by someone
who understands food for the soul.



donnarkevic: Buckhannon, WV. MFA National University. Current work appears/will appear in *RFD Magazine*, *Agape*, *New Verse News*, *Bindweed*, *Schuylkill Valley Journal*, and *Book of Matches*. In 2022, *Main Street Rag* published a novella of poetry entitled, *After the Lynching*.

Mother

Michal Mahgerefteh

Early light: the rooster's dawning call. Looking
for Abba, I run outside, climb the weathered brick
wall covered with luffa, scan the vast orange grove;

Abba is at the edge of the property handpicking sweet
lemon from the neighbor's trees, in his hand a bucket
of ripe blackberries he collected from the sandy veranda.

My grandmother Mami takes his blue jacket, adorned
with police medals and ribbons, carefully places it on
the back of his chair, and we all sit around a Moroccan

silver tray for early breakfast. He speaks with
disembodied voice; "Today was my last day at work,
don't worry! I promise, I will take care of her."



Michal Mahgerefteh is a poet and artist from Israel, living in Virginia since 1986. She is the author of four poetry collections with two new collections forthcoming in 2022 and 2023. Michal is the managing editor of *Poetica Publishing* and *Miriam Rachimi Micro Poetry Chapbook*. www.Mitak-Art.com.

Food TV Fantasia

Joseph A. Farina

Each morning
espresso or cappuccino
at historic chic cafes
in Rome, Milan, Venice and Florence
under a rising Mediterranean sun.

At noon:
Ligurian olives, kissed with extra virgin oil,
Prosciutto di Parma,
Pasta made by Milanese hands,
Tuscan wine in murano goblets,
Bocconcini di bufala and
Al Basilico Fresco beneath a Mediterranean mezzogiorno –
Vistas of dream cities unfolding in the background

Evenings
are slow passeggiate
Arm in arm
Along ancient rivers
Or coastal promenades
Banked with palazzos and palms,
Dusk scented
with Sicilian lemons, jasmine, and oranges –
Laughter outdoor, around
linen-covered tavoli.
The sound of the Mediterranean: a love song.
The setting sun: a chiaroscuro caress.
They're living their dolce vita

while we save and deny ourselves –
Hungry for their recipes.



Joseph A. Farina is a retired lawyer in Sarnia, Ontario, Canada. He is also an internationally acclaimed, award-winning poet. Several of his poems have been published in *Quills Canadian Poetry Magazine*, *The Wild Word*, *The Chamber Magazine*, *Lothlorian Poetry Journal*, *Ascent*, *Subterranean Blue* and in *The Tower Poetry Magazine*, *Inscribed*, *The Windsor Review*, *Boxcar Poetry Revue*, and appears in many anthologies including: *Sweet Lemons: Writings with a Sicilian Accent*, *Canadian Italians at Table*, *Witness from Serengeti Press* and *Tamaracks: Canadian Poetry for the 21st Century*. His poems have also been published in the U.S. magazines *Mobius*, *Pyramid Arts*, *Arabesques*, *Fiele-Festa*, *Philadelphia Poets* and *Memoir(and)*. He has had two books of poetry published — *The Cancer Chronicles* and *The Ghosts of Water Street*.

Deep-fried Sweet Potato Balls

Yi Jung Chen

Visiting the night market,
its fragrant smell made our mouth water.
Assorted golden brown and purple hues,
the tempting reason for us to get a bite.
The legend of forsaken potatoes,
enriched and renewed their lives
in an old man's hands.

Crispy on the outside,
the beguiling look waved at us.
Soft and chewy on the inside,
the QQ texture lingered around our palates.
Reminding me of the unyielding martyrs,
their fortitude fights,
akin to the sensation we felt,
the seeds began to grow and bloom,
into the dashing beauty
we could never ignore.

The screen of darkness fell,
painting rosy colors on our faces.
Your satisfactory smile,
floated like a zeppelin in the sky.

The Oyster Omelet

Bubbles popped in the jelly egg,
the sizzling sounds on the pan
wakes up every sensation.

Scraping the running edges toward the center,
half the bok choy and scallion were placed.
The misty wraiths of moisture
crawled up to my spectacle lenses,
repeatedly practicing the movements of
gathering around and dismissed.

Served with the vegetable side facing up,
the sweet aroma of potato starch,
mixed with the briny taste of the sea.
An ambrosia platter,
furnished with a touch of red chili,
is offered by hospitable islanders,
from a land of incredible ocean heirlooms,
Formosa.



everyday speech.

Yi Jung Chen teaches pupils with learning difficulties at Dounan Elementary School in Taiwan. She used to write children's stories for illustrated picture books both in English and Japanese separately, but they were kept unpublished. In her leisure time, she also writes poems in English, Chinese, and Taiwanese languages. Her dream is to share the beauty of the Taiwanese people with people around the world through the simplicity of

Wie man einen Pfirsich isst

Anja Herdt

Einen Pfirsich zu essen ist nicht mühelos:

Man muss geduldig sein, sanft —

nie in Eile.

Stattdessen muss man bereit sein,

zu verweilen

in den Schatten —

in der Stille

damit die reifenden Früchte die gewünschte Fülle erreichen —

weder mehr noch weniger.

Vergiss es die feierliche Elegie der Ordnung —

Es gibt keine festgelegte Art,

einen Pfirsich zu essen.

Keine Formel (egal was sie sagen).

Zwei Pfirsiche sind nie gleich so wie keine

zwei Menschen gleich sind.

Fragst du den Hüter des alten Obstgartens

für eine Frucht eine reife —

Er mit Freuden wird

die reifste Frucht pflücken —

das saftigste von allen.

“Lass die Haut dran, Jungel!” —

ist alles, was er verlangt.

Kein Schälmesser oder Entkernlöffel erforderlich:

Das sind die Erinnerungen an den alten

Obstgarten.

Eingehüllt von stiller Zufriedenheit
du hast gelächelt.

So wie du es jetzt tust —
hält ein altes Taschentuch
in deinen runzligen Händen:
das mit den verblichenen Pfirsichflecken
ab einem Nachmittag
im alten Obstgarten,
vor langer Zeit.



Anja Herdt kommt aus Berlin. Sie ist Malerin, Bäckerin und aufstrebende Schriftstellerin. Außerdem spielt sie gerne Klavier. Sie liest gerne Gedichte von Rainer Maria Rilke.

Morning at Whole Foods in Albany

Kirby Olson

The sun is a star
caught in a bottle.

Watery automobiles green as aquifers
rumble with diesel fuel
toward the parking exits.

Classic Indian dishes
bubble at the buffet.

Morning in Albany
as sheriffs gather

near the Tikka Masala
Chicken in heavy cream.

Windows allow the transfer of light.
Grocery carts roll by with children inside.



Kirby Olson is a professor at SUNY Delhi in the western Catskills. His books include a study of Gregory Corso and another of Andrei Codrescu, as well as a book of poetry entitled *Christmas at Rockefeller Center* (WordTech 2015). His poetry has appeared in *Partisan Review*, *Poetry East*, *Exquisite Corpse*, and several other journals.

Ginger's East Meets West and Back Again

Cynthia Gallaher

Crossing yet another longitudinal border,
ginger's medicinal and culinary power pen
redraws maps and silhouettes of cultures.

To Asians, it's half of everything,
to westerners, a gastronomic plaything,
taking on the toy-like guise
of gingerbread storybook shapes.

Each level teaspoon starts somewhere as rhizome,
looking more like misshapen sock monkeys
than curvy hips of svelte Ginger from Gilligan's Island.

She who warmed and sweetened innards of TV viewers
in ways only Thai food could decades later. Ever since,
legions of cruise ship goers on 3-hour tours and beyond
never leave shore without ginger's capsules
or a pirate's patch of essence on their arms
to ward off seasickness.

Will time reveal more about this pungent spice
as we grate further into juicy lands of white ginger,
its healing and tasty havens as mysterious as Shangri-La.

Cynthia Gallaher, a Chicago USA-based poet, is author of four poetry collections, many with themes, including *Epicurean Ecstasy: More Poems About Food, Drink, Herb and Spices*, and three



chapbooks, including *Drenched*. Her nonfiction/memoir/creativity guide *Frugal Poets' Guide to Life: How to Live a Poetic Life, Even If You Aren't a Poet* won a National Indie Excellence Award. Gallaher's other titles are *Night Ribbons*, *Swimmer's Prayer*, *Earth Elegance*, *Omnivore Odes* and *Private, On Purpose*. She was recently selected to be the final judge for the 2022 Prairie State Poetry Prize. A former advertising, corporate communications and public relations writer, she now spends her time, besides writing poetry, as an avid swimmer, yoga instructor and certified aroma therapist. Visit her

Linktree account: [https://linktr.ee/Cynthia Gallaher](https://linktr.ee/CynthiaGallaher).

Prosciutto

Joseph DiNallo

Glistening in their sheaths
of rendered lard —
clove-rubbed, pepper-flaked,
salt-armored —my father

hung these careful hams
bathed in equal parts warm
water and vinegar, turned
with a tenderness I envied.

How exquisitely he worked
the blade of his life! Down there
in his little stone room, running
the edge along his back

and shoulders, shaving himself
buttery-pink and paper-thin
to be folded on tongues,
served with wine and figs.



Joseph DiNallo is an Ohio native currently living in southern Louisiana. His work has appeared previously in *Gyroscope Review*, *Skynwatcher Press*, *The Son's Ear*, *Snowy Egret*, *Third Wednesday*, and *Miller's Pond* literary magazines.

Nettled #2. Grasped.

Betsy Bolton

whatever you do, do with all your might.

They blame it on Aesop, that patriarchal tale:
small boy, nettled, runs crying to mom or dad,
is told to man up in no uncertain terms.

Clearly not a connoisseur of nettles,
that imaginary Aesop, scolding small boys:
“Touch something gently, and you’ll be stung; seize it
boldly, gripe it fast, and it will never sting you.”
“Many sorts of persons, as well as things,
ought to be treated in the same manner,”
adds the Victorian version.

In pegging

the moral to Aesop, perhaps the patriarchs
meant to evoke the freed slave heading to Delphi,
a diplomat for Croesus, that king whose name
became a byword for wealth — but did they remember
that Aesop offended his prickly hosts
by telling fables they found insulting, until they
trumped up a charge of temple theft and chucked
him off a cliff? What’s the moral there?

While the boy cries, perhaps his sister sits
in the meadow, considers the nettle,
follows the angle of the spikes up from the ground,
wraps hand in skirt, presses the spikes softly down

to avoid the sting while picking the greens
for nettle soup.

When her brother comes
crying back, to test his mettle, grasp it fast,
does she slow him, show him a gentler feast?



Betsy Bolton's recent work has appeared in *The Hopper: Environmental Lit. Poetry. Art*, and *New Croton Review* and is forthcoming in *Split Rock Review*, *Minnow Literary Magazine*, *Northern Appalachian Review*, *Snapdragon: a Journal of Art & Healing*, and *Gyroscope*. Her chapbook *Mouth Art of the Bald-faced Hornet* was longlisted for the Kingdoms in the Wild Annual Poetry Prize. Betsy teaches at Swarthmore College, on Lenape land, at the edge of the Piedmont and the coastal plain. For more information,

see betsydotgallery.wordpress.com.

Annie's Biscuits

C. Eliot Mullins

2 cups flour in the Regency Rose teacup with the chipped rim

1 dinner spoon of salt

3 tablespoons of *Don't get too big for your britches*

A heaping mound of Crisco. *More.*

1 bruising pinch to the ribs

That's too much!

Baking powder, 2 shy dinner spoons

A Regency Rose of whole milk (buttermilk for Christmas)

Don't knead. You'll wreck it.

You forgot to preheat the oven...

450. Pan greased

Roll the dough out on the floured counter, ½ inch thick, cut with a water glass

I'm tired of cleaning up after you

A rolling pin to the knuckles.

Don't be sassy.

Pretend it doesn't hurt

Ten minutes. Check at 9

The scar on my wrist from the oven rack still visible 40 years later.

That's what you get for making a mess.



C. Eliot Mullins (she/her) is an educator, mental health therapist, friend of cats, lifelong Pacific Northwesterner, mother of two adult sons, and extreme introvert. Her work has appeared in *Lavender Review*, *Jeopardy Magazine*, *Interconnectedness: A Whatcom Writes Anthology*, *Limp Wrist*, and *Cathexis Northwest*. She resides in Washington State with her wife and assorted animals, feral and tame.

ART

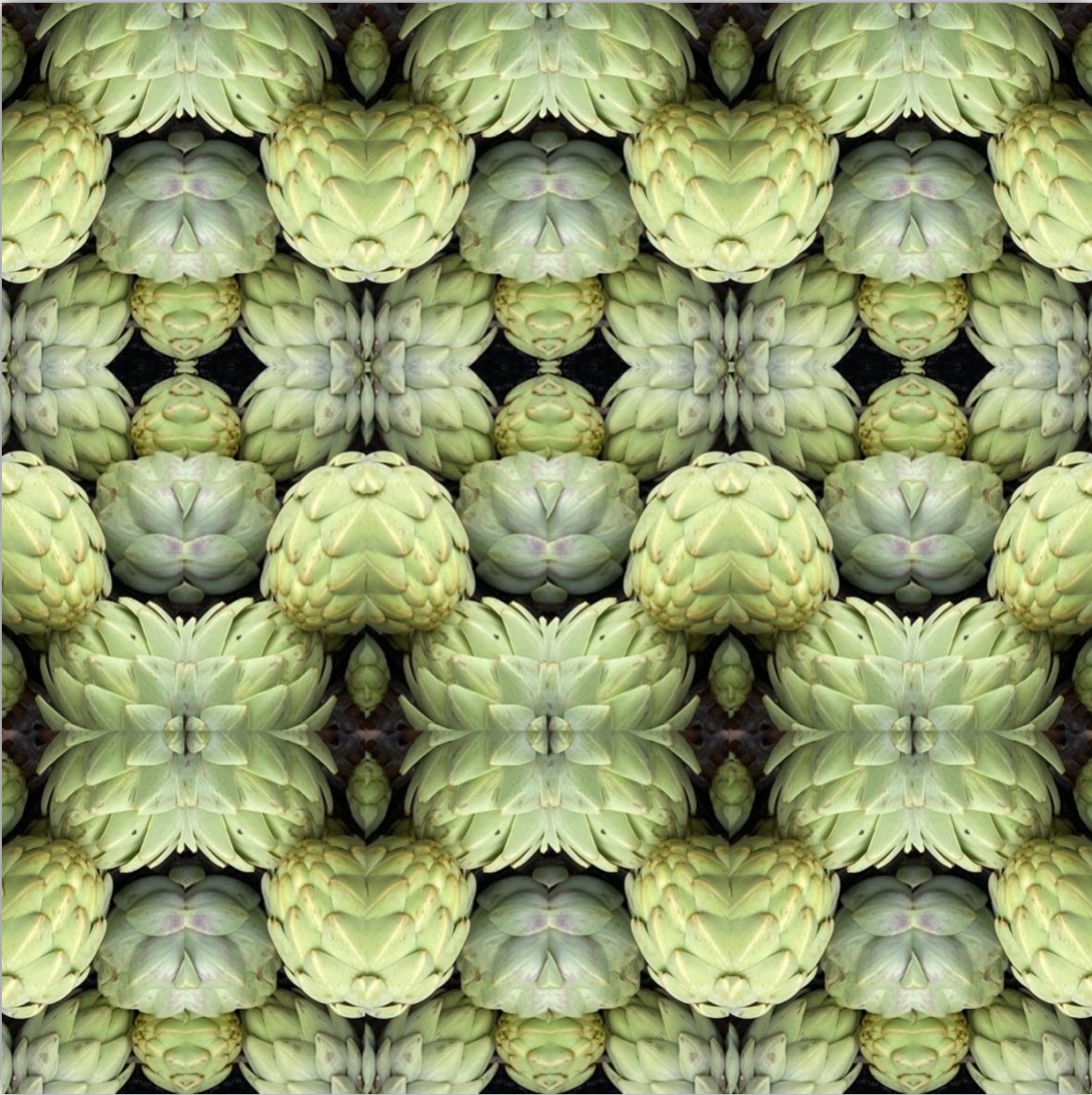


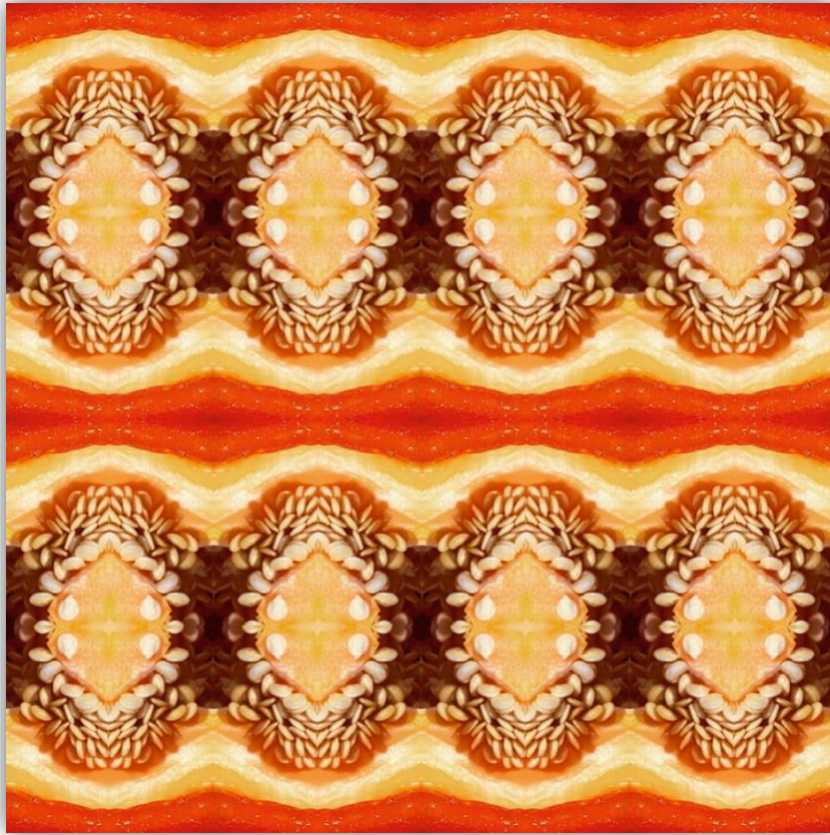
From the Land of Fruit and Vegetables: Photo Collages

by

Alexis Krasilovsky

Artichokes





Red Pepper



Passion Fruit



Alexis Krasilovsky is a filmmaker and writer based in Los Angeles. Some of her film art has been shown at the Centre Pompidou and the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Her global documentary feature, “Let Them Eat Cake” (about the pleasure and perils of pastries) won the Best Documentary Feature at the 2015 Paris Independent Film Festival. Her new book, *Watermelon Linguistics: New and Selected Poems* (Cyberwit – Finalist [Poetry-General], 2022 International Book Awards) also includes some food-related poems. She is the author of *Great Adaptations: Screenwriting and Global Storytelling* (Routledge – 2nd Place

Winner, 2019 International Writers Awards). Krasilovsky is a member of the Writers' Guild of America West. She likes to wear purple hair, and is passionate about passion fruit. For more, please visit Alexis Krasilovsky’s website: www.alexiskrasilovsky.com.

[Photo Credit: Kim Gottlieb Walker]

Dessert

Christopher Woods



“Think of caramel,” she’d said, “then think of me.”

But I could only think of the fan-shaped ginkgo leaf that fell off the loose, brittle pages of an old book.

It was yesterday or, maybe, the day before.

An afternoon of rain it was — we’d been to Mamo’s.

She: salted caramel ice-cream.

I: coffee.

It was always like that.

On our way back home we'd walked past the giant yellow ginkgo. She must've picked up a fallen leaf somewhere along the way —“for the keeps,” she'd smiled.

For the keeps. I now whisper to the papery leaf and the empty house.

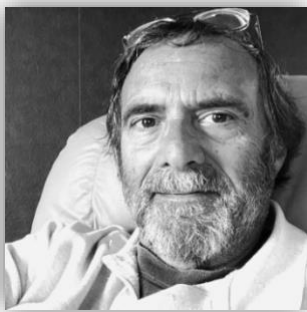
The ginkgo — with its rustling canopy of fan-shaped leaves — still stands in the town square. But Mamoa's gone. New shops and cafes have taken its place; they now line the old lane like colorful lacework along a frayed hemline. Cars hurtle down the cobblestone streets.

I enter a confectioner's and hear myself blurt out in a single breath: “One salted caramel ice cream, please.”

I take an empty seat by the window. The late afternoon sun streams in through the lace curtains.

I ate the ice cream, slowly, savoring the salt, the sweet, and all that falls in between.

[Vignette by Satarupa Sinha Roy]



Christopher Woods is a writer and photographer who lives in Chappell Hill, Texas. He has published a novel, *The Dream Patch*, a prose collection, *Under a Riverbed Sky*, and a book of stage monologues for actors, *Heart Speak*. His photographs can be seen in his Galleries: <https://christopherwoods.zenfolio.com/f861509283>

<https://www.instagram.com/dreamwood77019/>

His photography prompt book for writers, *From Vision to Text*, is forthcoming from Propertius Press. His novella, *Hearts in the Dark*, was recently published by Running Wild Press. His poetry chapbook, *What Comes, What Goes*, was published by Kelsay Books (kelsaybooks.com). He has received residencies from The Ucross Foundation and the Edward Albee Foundation.

Autumn: A Still Life

Komal Desai





Komal Desai is a self-taught artist and jewelry designer. She specializes in still-life painting. She also takes a keen interest in photography, art history, and gardening.

Eine leckere Reise durch Wien und Berlin

Vidya Nadiger



Warum haben viele Inder ein Problem mit dem Essen in Europa? Das habe ich bis jetzt nicht verstehen können. Schon das erste Mal, 1992, als ich, damals noch ein Teenager, in Deutschland war, konnte fast alles mit voller Freude essen, was auf den Tisch kam, außer Fleischgerichte, denn ich war und bin immer noch eine Vegetarierin. Knödel mit Linsen war eine der Präferenzen für mich.



Überlege ich da ganz tief, ob ich doch Apfelstrudel als Hauptspeise bestellen sollte, denn er ist meine absolute Lieblingsspeise. Meine Gedanken wandern zwischen Diät, Gesundheit und die Freude an dem Kuchen, der in Deutschland einfach köstlich ist. Doch entschied ich schließlich für meine Liebe zum Apfelstrudel. Hmmm...Apfelstrudel und schwarzer Tee eine tolle Kombination. und alles andere ist Beilage.



Im Sommer 2022, war ich unterwegs mit Kolleg* innen in Wien und hatte die einmalige Chance die schöne Stadt zu besuchen, um an einer internationalen Deutschlehrertagung teilzunehmen.

Seminare, Ausflüge, Konzerte, Begegnung mit neuen Leuten, alles war spannend, aber zwischendurch suchte ich nach leckerem Essen.



Die Auswahl war groß. Meine Diät durfte ruhig vergessen werden, denn ich konnte einfach nicht das widerstehen, was die Menüs anboten. Folien Kartoffeln mit Quark war eine spontane Entscheidung für den warmen Tag, die ich nicht bereut habe.



Es durfte nichts anderes als Spagetti mit Tomatensauce für den Abend sein. Die italienischen Restaurants sind die Besten und die Gäste werden dort mit Liebe bedient. Oh! war das eine gelungene, leckere, kulinarische Reise durch Wien und Berlin!



Vidya Nadiger ist eine der Gründerinnen von German Treffpunkt, ein Sprachinstitut und seit 8 Jahren beschäftigt sich als eine Deutsch-Lehrerin bei ihr eigenem Institut, in Hubli, Karnataka. Als eine ausgebildete Journalistin hat sie früher freiberuflich für einige English Zeitschriften wie „Green City Express“, „Nagara Life“ gearbeitet. Nun entdeckt sie wieder ihre Liebe zum Schreiben und diesmal zur deutschen Sprache.

Confluence

Sujoy Sarkar



The sea is far away from my suburban home. It's not just the distance, but also the surroundings that make the sea feel farther away than what it really is.

After all, 50 miles can't be too far!

The sea bass arrives, gutted and cleaned, sharp at ten. I have my fish (and most other things) home delivered although I enjoy strolling through crowded markets in remote towns. But in remote towns only, a few of which I call home.



" ... Hung with hard ice-flakes, where hail-scur flew,
There I heard naught save the harsh sea
And ice-cold wave, at whiles the swan cries,
Did for my games the garnet's clamour,
Sea-fowls, loudness was for me laughter,
The wrens' singing all my mead-drink. ... "

- The Seafarer (Egyra Pound)





There are many ways to cook a fish. The sea bass is delicate stuff. It calls for care. It does not call for fuss.

I lower the salted and peppered fish into a warm bath of bubbling butter. I adjust the flame to medium-low. I'd have preferred woodfire. And a cast iron skillet. And a simple meal by a flowing stream somewhere deep in the forest.

A confluence of land and water patterns my plate: the pan-seared fish nestles against a spray of herbs from the garden, fringed by roundels of fried potato and sliced lemon, done and dusted with a spare sprinkling of pomegranate seeds.



Sujoy Sarkar (Sujoy)

Although a technologist by passion and profession, Sujoy has strong curiosity in various diverse realms of knowledge and their grounded applications. Sujoy's primary interests in the domains of Science and Technology spans from Artificial General Intelligence (AGI), Quantum Computing to Automation. Sujoy is also a Senior Member at IEEE & ACM since 2010.

However, Sujoy is a generalist – a fervent consumer of knowledge in other non-technical fields such as History, Literature, Anthropology, Cosmology, Philosophy and Psychology. As such, Sujoy is a natural connector of 'dots'!

Sujoy is also very intrigued by the various nuanced applications of the Science of Gastronomy and Sujoy believes that 'inventing' a recipe (rather than replicating an existing one) is both science & art — a true delight of all the senses of every sentient being.

A connoisseur of Italian food, Sujoy enjoys a leisurely meal of pasta & fresh broccoli salad with homemade Italian dressing.

And, yes, Sujoy loves cats. Both big and SMALL. More information about Sujoy can be found at: <http://sujoysarkar.com/about/>