

Spring 1999

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University of Massachusetts Amherst

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L I B R A R Y



mOthertongue

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photo on page one courtesy of Kenan Gündüz

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"Poetry is what is lost in translation."

Robert Frost

Outono

Lilian P.W. Feitosa

outro tom no ar
ouro todo o sol
motou o tom do ar?
ou o outono só?
outro tonto nó
ouve tudo noutro tom
 tom sem dó:
 o tom do sol
 de outono

Fall

another allure in the air
flaring all the sun
can you feel the faint air?
or the fall alone?
another faltering bass
listens all in a falsetto tone
 a flawed one:
 the flat sun
 of fall

Autumn

Another hue in the air
aureate all the sun
have you asked about the air's tone?
or autumn's alone?
another awful humming
audibly in another tone
 not an auspicious one:
 the tone of the sun
 of autumn

As minhas palavras

Lilian P.W.Feitosa

Estou sentindo tanta saudade
das minhas próprias palavras...
Só ouço ecos dentro do meu
próprio crânio
Preciso do papel para
dar-lhes vida.
Viver. É o que as palavras
que se agitam no profundo do
meu inconsciente querem.
Liberdade. Pra brincar,
correr, voar (ou simplesmente falar)
São borboletas, libélulas,
pássaros engaiolados
desejando a liberdade,
sonhando com novas
possibilidades – que espiam
lá do fundo do coração
pelas frestas que às vezes
se abrem – nos raros momentos
em que me encontro com
serenidade suficiente pra
me lembrar delas.

My own words

I yearn so much for
my own words...
I hear only echoes inside my
own skull
I need paper to
give them life.
To live...is what the words
that are restless in the depth of
my unconscious want.
Liberty. To play,
to run, to fly (or simply to speak).
They are butterflies, dragonflies,
caged birds
wishing liberty,
dreaming of new
possibilities – that peek
from the bottom of my heart
through the cracks that sometimes
open – in the rare moments
in which I find myself with
enough serenity to
remember them.

Al Bosque en invierno

Ina Porras

Déjame caminar sobre tu piel,
tan nueva,
tan blanca,
tan virgen.

Esa piel que la noche
de anoche te obsequió.

Déjame caminar en tu silencio
traspasarte,
escucharte,
comprenderte.

Regálame el sonido de monedas
en tu riachuelo de hielo,
y la canción que canta el viento
cuando te acaricia y te besa.

Déjame comer los blancos frutos
que adornan tus veredas desnudas;

piérdeme en la blancura de tus colinas,
y déjame susurrar una canción de amor...

Para que la lleves a mi amado, lejos,
al otro lado del mar.

To the Forest in Winter

Let me walk on your skin,
so new,
so white,
so virgin like.

That skin that the night
of last night gave you.

Let me walk in your silence,
trespass you,
listen to you,
understand you...

Give me the sound of coins
in your ice creek,
and the song that the wind sings to you
when it caresses and kisses you.

Let me eat the white fruits
that decorate your naked paths;

get me lost in the whiteness of your hills,
and let me whisper you a song of love...

for you to take it to my beloved, far away,
at the other side of the sea.

Ivan Teodorovic

Jednom se ziui;
u tom jednom ziuotu couisek treba uzivati i biti scobodan.

You live once;
in that one life you must enjoy and be free.

Amor de Macho
Ina Porras

Amor de macho en celo
desafiante, depredador al acecho
de la hembra.

Tus ojos son como el mar en un invierno del trópico
que no pide, sino toma
en el abrazo de sus olas

todo destruye
todo lo ahoga

Macho en celo
hazme el amor.

-Ahora, aquí, ya-

desgárrame, hazme gritar
lléname las entrañas,
insaciable, con sabor a sal,

con sabor a piel
a sangre, a labios, a vientre

Quiero empaparme de ti,
mar, océano, río, lluvia,
sudor
calor

Eres mi macho, yo soy tu hembra
lléname de amor urgente, así
como el agua inunda la tierra.

Male Love

Love of Male in heat..
challenging, predator awaiting
for the female...

Your eyes are like the sea
of the winter in the tropics,
that never asks for anything, only take
in the embrace of its waves.

it destroys everything,
it sinks everything.

Male in heat
make love to me.

-Now, here, right this moment –

tear me apart, make me scream
fill me up inside,
insatiable, with taste of salt,

with taste of flesh,
of blood, of lips, of belly,

I want to get soak of you,
sea, ocean, river, rain
sweat,
heat

You are my male, I'm your female,
fill me up with urgent love, just like
the water overflows the earth.

Schlafen

Katherine Roback

Der Mond ist aufgegangen
Wir schlafen Beide zusammen.
Der Mann der immer lacht
Wir träumen die ganze Nacht
Weil der Mann immer lacht.
Wir wachen auf – zusammen
Die Sonne ist aufgegangen.

Lullaby

The moon has risen even in this weather
We will soon sleep together

The man who always laughs

We dream the whole night
Under the sky so bright

Because the man always laughs

Together we will wake up
And see, the sun is coming up.



Reflections

Photograph by Klebert Bezerra Feitosa

inintitulado

Lilian P.W. Feitosa

a incontável, inconmensurável
intensidade das impressões vai
inundando o coração
que diz: vai ser aprendiz
de um sonho mais vívido
que a realidade nua e crua dos dias.
a gente escreve só pra jogar fora
cada palavra sentida no fundo do
cérebro

untitled

the uncountable, incommensurable
intensity of impressions is
inundating the heart
that says: go to be an apprentice
of a dream more vivid than
the nude and crude reality of days.
we write only to throw away
each word felt in the bottom of the
brain

L'Immortelle

Lylian Y. Bourgois

J'ai suivi tous vos pas et h'ai lu tous vos livres,
Senti toutes les fleurs que vous aviez plantées,
Visité les endroits don't vous aviez parlé,
Et encore une fois, j'ai relu tous vos livres.

Vos êtres de papier, de sang et de sueur,
Plus vrais que nature, plus aimants, plus sincères,
Que des êtres vivants que nous appelons "frères",
M'ont conduit, m'ont guidé vers de magnifiques lueurs.

La vérité n'est pas là. Elle n'y tient pas toute
Entière. Les livres sont mots (à la limite
Des prières), mais ils m'ont montré assez vite
La voie dans une vie, un peu triste et amère.

J'ai revu tous vos pas et relu tous vos livres,
Planté toutes les fleurs que vous aviez plantées,
Ecrit aussi, parfois, de grands texts insensés,
Mais j'ai rencontré une êtres don't je suis ivre.

Le temps a passé, mais aussi cette folie,
Il ne me reste plus de vous qu'un ou deux livres
A lire, et la grande joie que vous pourrez suivre
Sur mes lèvres, sur mon chemin et dans ma vie.

Immortal

I followed all your steps and I read all your books,
Smelt all the flowers which you had planted,
Visited all the places you had spoken about,
And once more, I reread all your books.

Your paper and blood and sweat beings,
More real than in reality, more cuddling, more sincere
Than real people that we call “brothers”,
Lead me, guided me towards magnificent lights.

Truth is not there. It does not stand there
Completely. Books are words (maybe
Prayers), but they showed me quite quickly
A path in a life that was a little sad and bitter.

I saw again all your steps and I read again all your books,
Planted all the flowers that you had planted,
Wrote also, sometimes, big and pompous texts,
But I met some one whom I am drunk of.

Time passed, and also that craziness,
I have only left from you one or two books
To read, and the great joy that you will be able to follow
On my lips, on my path and in my life.

Ivan Teodorovic

Kroz godine razuma I uspjeha,
Godine nikada nisu bice vazne,
Razum je pokretac sujeta, _i_ tijela,
Uspjeh donosi sreću zivota!

In the desire for years of sanity and success,
The years are not important.
Sanity is an expression of the motion of the world and body.
Success brings happiness to life!



Strelitzia (Bird of Paradise)

Photograph by Klebert Bezerra Feitosa

Círculos y Esquinas

Ina Porras

No hay mucho que decir. En este momento, igual que antes. Las palabras se evaporan en el aire, como las gotas de lluvia en mayo.

Se ha dicho mucho y sin embargo no ha quedado nada claro, nunca. Se ha dicho todo y nada. Matar para vivir. Eliminar para sobrevivir. Purificarse para ser impuro otra vez. Viajes circulares, con esquinas inesperadas. Caminos alejados, apartados, fríos. Camino sintiendo el hielo bajo mis pies. Días y días que pasan y mi alma sigue fría como la nieve que cubre la colina detrás de mi casa. Como el hielo que traspasa la ventana y se solidifica por dentro. Como el pequeño arroyo que apenas si corre bajo la capa de hielo y nieve que lo cubre. Un arroyo que un día fue verano, lleno de vida. Que un día fue otoño, lleno de color. Y que tal vez un día será primavera otra vez, con agua fría y flores y mosquitos.

Círculos

Esquinas

Espacio

Círculos

Tiempo

Un avión que tal vez no llega. Trópico ardiente que se convierte en paraíso e infierno. En vida y en tumba. En agua y en lodo. En flores y en cadáveres. Cadáveres bajo la tierra. Del polvo eres y al polvo volverás. Para ser flores otra vez. Círculo. Con esquinas a veces dolorosas.

Pulgadas de blanca nieve que se acumulan en las carreteras para mezclarse con sal y barro y convertirse en lodo y llenar de herrumbre los carros. Nieve blanca que se torna café y se torna hielo y luego se transforma otra vez en lodo y en vapor espeso que se convierte en lluvia y vuelve a caer, ésta vez más tibio y menos suave. En círculos.

Un vuelo que te aleja. El mismo vuelo que te trajo. Un hola, un adiós. Un lago en medio de dos. Boston ciudad caprichosa llena de vientos fríos y parques con pozas de ranas para patinar. Boston con manos heladas y bolsillos tibios y besos, abrazos y versos a la orilla del mar. Boston de aeropuertos que te traen y te llevan. Y me llevan y me traen. En círculos con esquinas donde

no hay espacio y el tiempo pertenece a otro lugar, donde la lluvia cae junto a mi ventana y me canta su húmeda canción en una noche de domingo en otro lugar que no es Boston, que no es contigo.

Tiempo y espacio es relativo.

Amor, distancia y olvido es un hecho.

No te vayas otra vez. No dejes que me vaya de ti. Constrúyeme un círculo con tus brazos y piernas y enlázame, rodéame, secuéstrame y no dejes que me vaya. No dejes que me vaya otra vez. No dejes que me confunda en las esquinas que están tan llenas de basura y polvo y telas de arañas.

Si sólo pudieras escuchar al viento...si sólo pudiera yo hablar su idioma...

Circles and corners

There's not much to say. At this moment, like before. Words evaporate in the air, just like drops of rain in May.

Much has been already said and nevertheless nothing is clear, it's never been. Everything and nothing have been said. Kill to survive. Eliminate to endure. To purify and to become impure again. Circular trips, with unexpected corners. Far and away cold roads, days and days go on and my soul is still clenched and cold, like the ice that covers the hill behind my house. Like the ice that trespasses my window and solidifies from within. Just like the tiny creek that barely runs under the layers of ice and snow that cover it. A creek that once was summer, full of life. That one day was fall, full of color. And perhaps one day it'll become spring again, with cold water, flowers and mosquitos.

Circles

Corners

Space

Circles

Time

An airplane that perhaps will not arrive. Burning tropic that becomes paradise and hell. That becomes life and grave. Water and mud. Flowers and corpses. Corpses under the soil. Dust you are and dust you shall become. To turn into flowers again. Circles. With corners, sometimes painful.

Inches of white snow accumulate on the roads, to get mixed with salt and become mud and rust the cars. White snow that turns brown and turns into ice and turns into mud again, and thick vapor that becomes rain and falls down again, this time warmer and less softly. In circles.

A flight that takes you away. The same flight that brought you here. One hello, one good-bye. One lake in the middle of both. Boston, capricious city full of cold winds and frog ponds to

skate in. Boston with frozen hands and warm pockets, and kisses, hugs and poems by the side of the sea. Boston of airports that bring you here and take you away. And take me there and bring me back. In circles with corners where there is no space, and time belongs somewhere else, where the rain falls by my window and sings to me its moistened song a Sunday night, somewhere else that is not Boston, that is not with you.

Time and space is all relative.

Love, distance and forgetfulness are a fact.

Don't go again. Don't let me go from you again. Build a circle for me, with your arms and your legs and tie me down, surround me, kidnap me and don't let me go. Don't let me go again. Don't let me get confused in the corners, that are so full of trash, dust and spider webs.

If you could only listen to the wind...if I could only know how to speak its language.



Photograph by Klebert Bezerra Feitosa

Una Dama se congela sobre Ruedas

Alfonso Ferreras

Muñequita de papel
dueña de una voz
por cuyo filo se hiere
la paz de los sentidos.
Te crecieron largas, largas unas alas
Ay! pero resultaron de mariposa.
Cuando de pronto te descubriste
frente a frente
a la mugre de tu propio espejo
mientras mordías el fuego de una prueba
tan sólo por un rato frisado,
se chamuscó tu vuelo.
Y tu tenue figura
que acaso creí una vez
sin doblez alguna
se desploma con estruendo en cenizas,
por fríamente a solas desandar
sobre aquel punto en que te encontrabas
eternamente en llamas,
el resultado de un vano
instante de vida
irreversiblemente ya en un hilo
sin expresión
ya con sabor a muerte.

A Lady Freezing Upon Wheels

Little paper doll,
your voice is a voice
through which the peace
of the senses is shattered.
Long, very long winds
grew on you, O, but
they were only
butterfly wings!
Suddenly, seeing yourself
face to face with the grime
of your own reflection
on the mirror, biting
the fire of a trial rubbed on
just for a moment,
your flight was singed.
Your nimble figure, which once,
I suppose, I thought incapable
of deceit collapsed
into ashes with a crash,
alone wandering through
the place where forever
you were in flames,
the outcome of a vain
instant of life, already
irreversible turned into
a thread without expression,
on her lips already
the taste of death.

Translated by Giovanni Di Pietro

Identidad

Maya B. Castellon

Nací para razones del ritmo
Un renacimiento de su sangre, su cara.
Estoy viviendo porque la fuerza de la corazon tenía compasión.
Puedo recordar al color transparente de su piel.
Una visión sin seguridad ni paciencia.
Oigo a los sonidos de su voz.
Veo la profundidad en sus ojos,
Como la verdadera vista de la vida.

Identity

I was born of a rhythmic reason.
A rebirth of your blood, your face.
I am living because the power of the heart had compassion.
I can recall the transparent color of you skin.
A vision without security nor patience.
I listen to the sounds of your voice.
I see the depth in your eyes,
Like the true sight of life.



Photograph by Klebert Bezerra Feitosa

ישראל מ. רב. פלד

ספירות

ספירות מלא מלא
יהי מה שבוטח בדביות
שקויות לספירות.

מלא מלא מלא
מלא מלא מלא
מלא מלא מלא
מלא מלא מלא.

מלא מלא
מלא מלא.

Patience

Yehudit B. Heller

My grandmother always served
tea hot in cups of thin glass,
thin with patience, thin with use,
and we waited for them to cool.

*We must always wait, she said,
the way we do, with wine, for Elijah.
But the eyes must remain
open.*

And her eyes were blue.

Translation by Agah Shahid Ali

יחידות בן-לילה

סוף ה'קאר

גוף אורקטי.

חפץ,

ה'קאר יחידות חפץ?

יחידות חפץ יחידות חפץ

יחידות חפץ יחידות חפץ.

יחידות חפץ,

יחידות חפץ יחידות חפץ.

יחידות חפץ יחידות חפץ.

יחידות חפץ יחידות חפץ.

יחידות חפץ יחידות חפץ.

יחידות חפץ

יחידות חפץ, חפץ,

יחידות חפץ

יחידות חפץ יחידות חפץ

יחידות חפץ.

יחידות חפץ יחידות חפץ,

יחידות חפץ

יחידות חפץ יחידות חפץ

יחידות חפץ.

יחידות חפץ יחידות חפץ

יחידות חפץ יחידות חפץ.

End of A Visit

Yehudit B. Heller

You are going away again,
as you have so many times.
But wait,
have you packed everything?
One never knows
what one really needs.
Check again, examine the luggage-
So often we leave the necessary behind.

You are packing, I see you-
Your suitcases, one on top of the other,
just as you pile the fears.
And the compressed thoughts
 hanging
swinging
like the swollen purse dangling from your shoulder.

You collect all the parts of yourself.
And then, as is always your way,
you leave the door
open behind,
You don't look back.

I tell you Don't worry.
I myself, as before, will close the door.

Translation by Agah Shahid Ali

About Our Contributors

Lylian Bourgois is a graduate student at UMass. He was born in France and writes in his native language.

Maya B. Castellon is an undergraduate student at UMass working on a BFA in printmaking. She writes in her native language, Spanish.

Klebert Bezerra Feitosa is a graduate student of Physics at UMass. He was born in Pernumbuco, Brazil and in recent years lived in São Paulo. Photography is one of his ‘hobbies’. He believes photographs are a great way to capture feelings and ideas that are present in peculiar images that pop up every moment around us. Besides, they allow us to see the same world through somebody else’s eyes, moving our own reference frame to a different one, often times unexpected.

Lilian P.W. Feitosa, a graduate student in Comparative Literature at UMass, is from São Paulo, Brazil and writes in her beloved mother tongue, Portuguese. The experience of “living another language” often makes her miss her own so much that she is compelled to write... only if just to get in touch with ‘her own words’. She is also very interested in translation studies and finds it challenging and very enjoyable to translate her poems into English.

Alfonso Ferreras, a Fulbright-Laspau grantee, is a graduate student of Comparative Literature pursuing his masters degree at UMass. He is originally from the Dominican Republic, where he is an elementary and English teacher at Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo. He plans to return to his home country when he finishes his degree to become a cultural worker and research Dominican popular and folkloric culture. He has recently finished his first book of poems, *Ante Las Sombras de una Ironia*, though it remains unpublished.

Yehudit Heller is a poet and educator. She was born in Israel and writes her poems in Hebrew. Her first book of poetry, *The Woman in the Purple Coat*, was published by Eked Publishing in 1996. Yehudit is active in translating numerous Hebrew works including folk tales, poetry, and socio-political philosophy. She has lived in Amherst since 1984. She has taught numerous courses at the university about Jewish and Israeli poetry and literature. She is currently pursuing her doctorate degree in Comparative Literature.

Ina Porras is a UMass graduate student in Resource Economics. This June she will be presenting her thesis. She is originally from the pacific coast of Costa Rica. Much of her work is influenced by the ocean and nature. The three works presented here, *Al bosque en Invierno*, *Amor de Macho*, and *Circulos y Esquinas* all share a common inspiration.

Katherine Roback is an undergraduate studying Animal Science at UMass. She plans to get a Ph.D. in the field. Her poem is based on a German lullaby. When she was young, her mother would sing her to sleep with German lullabies. Her poem, *Lullaby*, is dedicated to her mother.

Ivan Teodorovic, an undergraduate at UMass, writes in his native Croatian.

