

Letter from the Editor

With the election upon us, a lot of people have politics on their minds. As such, you'll find quite a few political poems in this issue of the Erato. Disagree with any of them? Send in your own poem! But first, please note the new e-mail address for submissions on the back page. Thanks as always to all who submitted poems for this issue, and we hope to see you at one of our readings.

Triada Samaras**An Election Day
Valentine from
the White House**

Nirvana
Constant contact
Breath less together nest
Valued subscriber
Try it free half
Chocolate cookie
Made by my hand sown by
You take the quartered rest
Keep it simple
Snared your lover
Significant other oh,
Sweet Valentine!
Will you be mine?
Giving is the Nirvana
Freedom from the endless cycles
Of suffering, birth and death
And the cookie
Rumbling sometime s
Be Mine!
The darkest piece
I await you here
On Cloud Nine!

Tim Brennan**The Penny Arcade**

Step right up! 3 RPG's for a dollar

In the 1st row we have the infantrymen
The ponds of the shooting gallery –
1 point each

Behind them, traveling in the opposite
direction
A row of humvee's – 5 points each

Next are the bradley's, moving faster
they are harder to hit – worth 10 points

In the opposite direction are the tanks
Only a few per line, they are 'sitting
ducks' – 25 points

Overhead are the helicopters,
Harder to hit, but worth - 50 points

The last row has a variety from the fleet
Pick your boat, so it won't float – a
prize of 100 points

Don't cut & run folks!
Here's your chance to defend your
homeland

If you're a visitor,
no problem neighboring countries are
playing

This is the hottest event since people
stopped going to the Voting pavilion
That game no longer became fun

People would hang out in the Lobby
& buy votes

The normal players would never win
& most didn't understand the process

Step right up!
3 RPG's for a dollar ...

(Tim B. USN/Ret)



Statue at Grand Army Plaza – Photo by Daryl Lang

Angela Lockhart**Liberty the Light
unto Nations**

From the Seven continents and the seven
seas
These huddled masses
Yearning to breath free
Believed this land was made for you and
me.
Liberty, the light unto nations brings
So let freedom ring, let freedom sing

From the seven continents and the seven
seas
A land some how made for you and me
Liberty welcomed the wretched refuse
Of other teeming shores
Holding her lamp beside the golden door
"Send these the homeless, tempest tossed
to me"
And let freedom ring, let freedom sing

Witness to the Twin Towers fall
She holds the lamp still as others build
walls
This is not liberty and justice for all
Does anyone remember her original call?

Across the seven continents and the seven
seas
The tides of the masses still yearn to
breath free
Liberty, the light unto nations brings
While some where in America
Someone yearns to breath free
Singing this land was made for you and
me
Let freedom ring.
Let freedom sing
Let freedom ring.
Let freedom sing

**Who's the
Immigrant Here?**

First it was called, Amaruca
This land of the feathered serpent,
Land of the free
People traveling freely north and south
First Nation
Keepers of the Eastern and Western Doors
Keepers of the sea washed, sunset gates
As Europe came to these shores

Africa came to these shores
Asia came to these shores
Becoming the four corner land of the
United
North, south, east, west
Red road,
White road,
Black road,
Yellow road
One road

Keepers of the
East and West Golden doors
First Nation tricked for beads
When Europe came to these shores
Africa came to these shores
Asia came to these shores
Amaruca, Land of the feathered Serpent
America, Land of the free

They came on the Mayflower
By Middle passage, Trail of Tears
Coffin ships, first class
Second class and "steerage"
They run across the desert, wade across a
river
And die in big airplanes
First World
Old World
Third world
New World
Amaruca, Land of the feathered Serpent.
America, Land of the free

Ricky Stuart**The Threat of Love**

To break the walls
To break the spirit
To get to being
To connect with another
To smash the façade
To break the image

To fill the heart
To empty the soul
To mirror the self
To be alone
To be together
To know chaos
To be lost
To be found
The threat of involvement
The threat of love!

Tim Brennan**American Apathy**

Turn a blind ear
from the anonymous TV
and surf with a deaf remote:

"Today in West Virginia
14 miners were trapped
in a mine explosion in what appears to be
caused by a discarded cigarette

Overseas:
On the Philippine Island of Leyte
a mudslide buried an elementary school
The clear-cutting of ancient tropical
forests
may be the cause

Relief teams are being flown in from
Central America
where a similar slide buried
a primitive Mayan village

In Iraq:
14 people were killed
including a Marine; a female BBC
correspondent &
the newly-elected mayor of the local town.

Up next – Sports
& Weather..."

Surf on -
'till sleep envelopes your nerf recliner
like breaking waves
in a technicolor world
Ride a dream channel
through a remote land
muted only by commercials...



Photo by William Duke

Triada Samaras

Skyscrapers in Your Backyard

Everything is education
Parents
The way you brush your teeth
Up and down
Or side to side is
Seen and emulated by your little ones

The way you sit in traffic
Fuming
Is it polite? to curse
The suffocation of skyscrapers growing
In your backyard?
The world is watching
From the back seat

So you might say,
The heavy traffic gives us more time to
draw,
Honey, and
The windows need to be shut
Tighter,
But we can hear
Mr. Mozart better!

While the hungry honk
In heat and shadows
Atlantic Avenue development is
In your veins
Seething now
The flyers in your mailbox
Brought it to you yesterday

Or you might explain,
The noise is going to hurt your ears,
Honey,
But we can take the subway!
Oops,
It looks a little crowded down there,
I think we need to forget this trip,
Forget this avenue, Honey,
Too many darn skyscrapers
Blocking the view

Or brightly inquire,
Do you still remember way back when, way
Back before the skyscrapers blocked the
sun?
You used to play here
By that tree
You were born here, Honey,

Where it looks just like Manhattan now,
Do you still remember the yard?
The one they mauled
To give more space to the new yards
They call the Atlantic ones?
Too hard for me to explain why,
It's all a nightmare to me now,
Atlantic Yards a playground?
No, Honey,
A different kind of yard

A giant grey skyscraper park,
And a little green yard too,
Maybe one with grass, but
I can't seem to find it here,
It's maybe small with no
Convenient parking and
I can't remember how it looks in the flyer
Or how this nightmare actually ends

Let's try to go home now
Burn the flyer they sent us
Write to the mayor the governor?
No, Honey, they like the big yard not the
small one
The noise is deafening in your ears
As it pumps the rage to your brain

In thumps and bumps and you run, not
walk
Back to find your yard, back to find your
house
Back to Brooklyn where Brooklyn once
stood,
There was a time when the man in uniform
could not take away
Your house your life your yard when
small stuff mattered, but it's too late
There are skyscrapers growing here now
You lost your track, you think
You might have lost your tracks
Beneath the yards someplace.

From the back seat
Comes a quizzical stare
More unbearable questions,
Where did you go Mommy?
Back to the yards again?

No, you mutter lying,
Don't you just love that?
Your veins popping from your forehead
As you squint through your window
shield
Looking to find Brooklyn?
Trying to remembering it as it once was?
Now you know
You did lose track,
You lost the distant tracks that lie green
Beneath the backyards of your mind

Beatrice Diamond

Renewal, Flora And Woman

Floral beauty
with plethora of ripe berries
seductive to birds
dropping seed,

Woman's beauty
with breast and supple body
seductive to man's
mating instinct:

Flora present
repetitive seasons' crescendos of
falling and growing seed,
repeating fertility
with longevity,
seasonally awakening
to warmth and youth.

Woman proudly presents
repetitive seasons of crescendos
ejecting and nurturing seed.
Seasons finite,
woman goes to final slumber
in dark oblivion.
Her "elan vitale" perpetuates
in generations of seed.

There is beauty,
undying pattern in nature.

Henry Ruhl Hubben

Time Is Kept

time is kept
by the deaths and births
the grapple and grimace
gasp and slap
of fleshy commingling
and goodbyes
otherwise how would we know?
she would not move
as revolutions
as seasons
root to branch,
seed to flower
each nanosecond
her husband's gone
her baby's come
like stars who died a billion years before
I see them sparkling high above me
head thrown back
I'm looking up into an October night
racing to dawn
the present can only be... distracted
am I like that star?
take away the past
take away the future
what's left?
we are those who went before
straining in our traces
to dance the next chapter
what happens next?
living out dreams & visions
born half a million years ago

Valerie Poulin

No Photographs of You (1987)

On your trip to our apartment
in the city
the one time
you dared fly, braved the skies
you asked my sister
why
there were no photographs
of you
none of her she shrugged
after your funeral
she poured snapshots
across my mother's bed
shaping a quilt of black
and white shadows
hummed a cantata that tasted of salt
palmed her favourite
photo
turned it over
showed me
a young man of nineteen
his back
to the camera lens



Photo by Daryl Lang

erato

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We accept submissions of poems
and photographs via email:
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Space is limited and we give
preference to poems that have
been previewed at the Poetry
Project's open reading.

The Park Slope Poetry Project

meets the first Tuesday of every
month at 7:30 pm in the basement
of St. John-St. Matthew Emanuel
Lutheran Church, 283 Prospect
Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11215.
All are welcome.

Directions: The church is on
Prospect Avenue between 5th
and 6th Avenues. By subway,
take the M or R to Prospect
Avenue or the F to 7th Avenue.

Upcoming Readings:
Dec. 5 - Angela Lockhart + open
Jan. 2 - Obsidian + open
Feb. 6 - Richard Fien + open
Mar. 6 - Karl Kavaldo + open

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