

THE FESTIVAL REVIEW

VOLUME 2. SUMMER 2019.



Opening Remarks

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Literature gives us a chance to connect. Whether with ideas or people or cultures, the written word contains a power that bridges gaps of a geographical nature as much as a psychological one.

At a time when many choose to dismiss or sneer at the different and the Other, stories and poems and essays and translations offer us another path.

Throughout my life, I've often found artistic communities – of which I have been fortunate enough to be a part – to represent an inclusivity, openness, intellectual curiosity, and appreciation for that which differs from either themselves or the supposedly indexical world at large.

The reason for this comes down, I believe, to the general nature of congeniality and mutual respect the arts offer, the understanding that life is difficult and tragicomic, that ultimately we must find our own way, but that it is much easier with a community of support.

Building that community requires a commitment to the freedom of utterance – and the tenacity to fight for that same right – in whatever form it may arrive.

It is my sincere hope that *The Festival Review* continues this tradition and builds upon it.

Thank you for reading.

Neal Tucker, Editor-in-Chief



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Uncle Carnie in the War

BY LAURINDA LIND

Your great-great-great uncle
Carnie as a kid fell out of a tree
onto I think a branch that broke
with such force, it stuck into
his skull. A chum who'd been
chewing tobacco pushed a plug
down into Carnie's new head
hole. Then, fast-forward to him

at twenty-four with the hole healed,
though not the head, which refused
to grow as strong as the rest of him,
but the caesars of nineteen seventeen
didn't mind sending a kid who was
backed up inside a man's body off
to battle. The first he won

the next fall when he got the hell
out of Camp Devens near Boston
before the bomb of the flu epidemic
that dropped a hundred men a day.
It didn't take long for leaders to learn
Carnie never would turn old
enough to war, so they sent him

home to that huge family that hugged
him back in, and when later ten
million martyrs were done dying for
Franz Ferdinand and twice as many
more buried for the blue in their lungs,
Carnie's conflict was already over.
After, he still stayed alive until

nineteen fifty-five, when he poured
away elsewhere glad to exit out
through the door in his head
that had never quite closed,
that deep scar against all those
incomprehensible things he saw.



Meeting Li Bo After an Absence of Years

BY STEVE KLEPETAR

After an absence of years, I return to Li Bo,
find him in a little bar downtown drinking
red wine, scribbling poems.

I sit down at his elbow, smile, nod
at his bright face illuminated by Guinness
in the tavern window. He offers me
wine. I swallow it off.

The bar tender opens a new bottle
with a quick turn of his wrist.

An Australian vintage, no cork. I pour us each a glass.

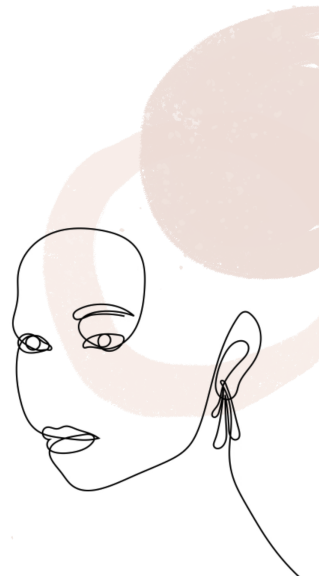
We salute each other, swirl the wine,
testing its legs (not bad), sniffing its aroma
(passable), sipping a mouthful (a little raw,
though peppery and strong).

"Since I saw you last," he says, steady and
quiet, "my father died. I wrote an elegy
for him, how he taught me magic when my mother's
back was turned. Her poems always rhymed,
but he chimed with the planets in free verse,
trained me to look through the curtain swinging
gently before the world."

I show him poems about a landscape in Hell,
about a family caught in history's flaming arc.

"Yes," he says "I see that you have written
your way back to this place. I have held you
in my thoughts, as this glass holds the wine we share."

We sit, drinking quietly as night folds us
in her dark mantle, recalling the honored dead.



Amor

BY PABLO NERUDA. TRANSLATED BY CHRIS JANSEN

Woman, I might have been your son, for having drunk
the milk from your breasts as if from a spring,
for having looked at you and felt you by my side,
and having your golden laughter and crystalline voice.

For having felt you in my veins the way God is in the river,
and having adored you in the sad bones of dust and limestone.

Because your being passes through my side, painless,
and emerges in the next stanza, purged of all evil.

How I would know how to love you, woman,
how I would know how to love you, love you
like no one has ever known.

To die, and still
to love you more.

And still
to love you more
and more.

*Mujer, yo hubiera sido tu hijo, por beberte
la leche de los senos como de un manantial,
por mirarte y sentirte a mi lado y tenerte
en la risa de oro y la voz de cristal.*

*Por sentirte en mis venas como Dios en los ríos
y adorarte en los tristes huesos de polvo y cal,
porque tu ser pasara sin pena al lado mío
y saliera en la estrofa -limpio de todo mal-.*

*Cómo sabría amarte, mujer, cómo sabría
amarte, amarte como nadie supo jamás!*

*Morir y todavía
amarte más.*

*Y todavía
amarte más*

y más.



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