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Malgorzata Bobak

Małgorzata Karolina Piekarska

Marek Czuku

Maria Jastrzębska

Maria Jolanta Kowalska

Marlena Zynger (Warszawa, Polska)

Marta Berowska (Warszawa, Polska)

Marta Brassart

Michał Wroński

Mieczysław Wojtasik

Mira Łuksza

Miroslaw Majewski

**Małgorzata Anna Bobak
Pictures (Obrazy)**

Wrapped in darkness
I pass around your side of bed
Although you are now sleeping in another place.

Do not call my name
I have no ears for your tender words

Although I am lying here
where the two of us lied before
I am trying to forget pictures
reflected under my eyelid
set in
forever

Translated by Dorota Zegarowska

Małgorzata Anna Bobak
Simple geometry (Prosta geometria)

Look at how friendly and beautiful it is
Mathematics is an alphabet
that you can use to calculate
and find methods for weasel thoughts
I was always alone
like this tree behind the window
Even when I listen to Strauss and Beethoven.
Simplicity (Prostota)

God's beautiful invention
remains in atoms
solar system
cell splitting
leafs falling
sewing on buttons
and even poisoning rats

What is the need for all this waste?

Translated by Dorota Zegarowska

Małgorzata Anna Bobak
Owning (Posiadanie)

I would like to know
if I have a soul
in addition to body

Cause if I only have my body
I miss all
that I owe.

Translated by Dorota Zegarowska

Małgorzata Karolina Piekarska
Baby Girl

So you are
Proof?
The two lines on the pregnancy test

In my mind
I furnish your little room
buy a stroller
we go to the first walk
I hear your first word

pain in the lower abdomen
temperature
the world changes as you...
you are now only a memory
spot of blood on the board in the toilet
your father's scream that I did not cleaned IT up

he slams the door when comes out
will not come back

you know that he did not want you
right?
why not to choose life
anyway ... he wanted a boy
and you certainly were a girl

you do not exist
only a test of two lines
long lying on the nightstand
lines fade
now there is even evidence
you existed

Marek Czuku

Autumn

the ants and earthworms have fallen asleep
nobody knows where and how
the trees went crazy and send gilded letters
to the thick cheerful litter

the wind applies moist compresses
to the awakened from the cold grass
the soil offers new life
no alternative to the good old paradise

between the sun and the moon
the shadow of night hangs
tomorrow will be almost the same
as it was years or centuries ago.

Translated by Alicja Kuberska

Marek Czuku
Winter

The mature snow climbs the stairs
of trees nestled in the darkness.
The walkway attracts bright lights
competing with the magic of the Christmas tree
On the roof of the neighbourhood garage.
the footsteps of birds look like tiny airplanes
And the dogs- like turtle shells.

It is as it should be .
Traffic moves slowly and changes into
a dreamy journey, during which
everything can happen

Translated by Alicja Kuberska

Marek Czuku
Dog

The night sends signals from other worlds
and soaks the windows with hot cold
It ceases moving

Wherever you are
do not reveal yourself hastily with this

there are
so many single men
so many single women

a dog lies in the bow of my legs
whining in his sleep and moving his paws
fills the void.

Translated by Alicja Kuberska

Marek Czuku
Kitten

What is behind that open window
who lives there
what colour are the walls

on the windowsill
is a small delicate kitten
with a white-beige mouth
it swings towards the world

with curiosity and courage of explorers
of the highest peaks
and freezing poles

it is like the naïve and carefree child
in its first
words and steps.

Translated by Alicja Kuberska

Marek Czuku
Squirrel

Blocks. A lonely willow
next to the kiosk with the blue
roof. Where we buy groceries

and sweets. It is going to rain
Suddenly a red squirrel leaps
from nowhere

to climb up rapidly up the trunk and disappear
nobody knows where. An unexpected
portion of grace.

Translated by Alicja Kuberska

Maria Jastrzębska
MICHAL

He's seventeen
plays heavy metal, likes beer.
He met a man at Warsaw Central
who took him home,
pays his way.
Michał shows me his new
silk shirt, peacock green -
no messing, that's quality.

I'm not one of them
'aunties' - which is what they call fags here.
I'm normal - this is just for now.
Tell me, is it better
over there in England.

I'm trying to rescue the plants
in their apartment.
The living room doesn't get much light.
and they don't look
cared for enough.
Michał helps me out.
He tells me about his great grandmother -
she was all right -
kept a pig and talked to it,

so he understands
when I say
you've got to *talk* to plants.
Is it better over there, he asks
in England.

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**MARIA JOLANTA KOWALSKA
BY POEM**

I pass with verse
all thresholds

I merge
into the ocean of life

on the stave I scud
to stars

and in Bethlehem night
I kneel with him by the creche

my verse
pulsates
in memory's hearts

MARIA JOLANTA KOWALSKA
I BREATHE THE SILENCE

I hum her favourite chorus

I whisper -
you reached for my heart
you hide your soul
in a sweet stream of
desire

wherever fate throws me
you are with me
and with my poem

MARIA JOLANTA KOWALSKA
YEARNING

Eyes of Canada
are misting over
The country's fragrant with resin,
milk and honey

in the heart
abandoned shell
echo pulsates

letter
pens healed wounds...

Soft evening light
charge April pollen

in their crown rests
beloved
longed
weary

unimported
good or bad
small or large

sensitivity dream of beauty

Fear to face

men's cry
held a breath

this hell on earth
everyday heroes

tear victims

where are you safe world?
settled
marking their exam of humanity
in a sea of ruins

MARIA JOLANTA KOWALSKA
RAT RACE

promotional ladder
higher and higher

first suits
zero of truth
personality in s h a p e

fighting rush to
what better nibble for yourself

promotional ladder are cracking

The Poetry of Marlena Zynger

by Aleksander Nawrocki

Viewed against a background of an increasingly uniform poets and cultures, the poetry of Marlena Zynger is expressive and unique. Firstly, she writes poems with rhyme and rhythm, focussing the potential energy, both shaping the reader's reaction and making them memorable. Secondly, her works have their own vocabulary and an imagination which throws away the textbook. Third, these works exist in their own unique space, neither placed everywhere or nowhere, but in the country where the author lives and observes that which others are unable to notice, or of which they are somehow ashamed, scared of accusations of the literal, or (and who knows why these days) an unfashionable clinging to a homeland. So when Marlena writes about Warsaw's Lazienki park, her favorite dishes in a restaurant, the family and her own, far from metaphysical, dilemmas, she discreetly exposes a sensual femininity. She knows the names of the trees, the birds, can see beauty in a rotating leaf, and wants to be 'in your plans for next week'. And if that schedule is busy, she will 'let her hair down and with the wind arm in arm go out for coffee' alone.

Marlena's poems make one wish to return to them, even to sing them. And indeed many have been set to music and are sung: Motley; Tarantella; Love in Warsaw Lazienki park. The words live a dual life - as great poems, and as songs sung in Polish and in translation. Her poems have inspired the artwork of eminent painters, and translators eagerly bring them into their own languages.

Marlena Zynger
tick-touching

clock ticks
you touch me

lightly tenderly time potters
round nooks in the room
breath of soul and body turns
in the rhythm of clock words and gestures

hearing only double echoes
voices of hearts and ticking

in strong emotions of chimes
time of kisses runs by
too fast passing the moment
blinks with shadows
disappears with light
as water in a Monet
your stroke vibrates
and stays in touches of dreams

pulsing time flows evenly
wave of voices in our blood
full of you i stay enclosed
like tears in sketches by Munch

clock ticks
heart beats

unwilled a noose about the neck
feet thighs hips hands
captured by a messenger of desire
nameless and without face
echo of time thoughts and dreams

breast heaves in thought
quickened by touch
quietly speaks the clock of life

heart listening
you touching

Translated by Anita and Andrew Fincham

Marlena Zynger
indian summer

late afternoon blows perfume
essence of scents collected in the past
delicately matching appropriate auras
bouquet of abundance connection touch

hints of infusions of herbs of experience
flowery resins arising from root
powerful seduction so casually played
desirous of coolness and heat

smoothing with softness and teasing with thorns
secretly glinting in colours of change
late summer marches through woods across meadows
in gold and in red and gossamer webs

sometimes at rest in unsteady suspension
among pine needles leaves flowers meadow spreads
allowing existence of memory mist
light racing among branches of shrubs

as this summer late afternoon breath
so was I conscious of body and mind
casting spells of honey tar and sighs
playing with life without trembling or fear

Translated by Anita and Andrew Fincham

Marlena Zynger
spring

i rise up lightly
opening my hands
fingers stretching
woken by shivers
breath pervading
earth and body

i yearn so much
still more and more

eyes shine
absorbing rays
from meadows woods sky
first sigh
juicy green
foamy azure
gaudy flowers

i fly through scents
of swollen buds
grass dewed by breath
caressed by scent
kept close to temples
trembling the space around
body in waves

yet something still is insufficient
something i wish more

amid the whispers of leaves
and green needles
in shade and shine of bush

and trees inspired
i raise my thoughts
and thirsting (wanting) body
on vapours of spring

and i give in to magic

changeable like her
subservient led astray
i give in penetrate
all permeated
i raise fall apart
join into one strange whole

it matters not
if more or less

Translated by Anita and Andrew Fincham

Marta Berowska

Letters From Margaret Trakl To Her Brother

Letter 1.

We could sin only like the rest of them
With a bold look
Whisper while with others
Or with a loud question asked in the dining room
For which we were scolded by our aunts stern looks

We could sin only like the rest of them
With naive lies – just like other children
It was even allowed at home
You were sent to the corner for a while
And then
God forgave you
And you could do it again

But our sin was different
They couldn't be like that
Remember Georg
It was July - remember
With the open window
Scared by the shadow of the tree...
You got to know all of me as the first
For the first time

Letter 2

Snow flowers
Like droplets of sweat on your forehead
When after the night with me you hurriedly put
Your shirt smelling like a pharmacy

Hurry up hurry up you said
The collar the cuffs
A little button fell
What if the aunt finds it?
Oh Georg
Will you stop being scared
You hugged me in a hurry and I desired so
much
Of your steady breath next to my temple
So different than fear
- This noise at the door - it's a mouse
Georg
And the whistling sound
That's wind in a leaky window

And only scream was close
That was my scream
Yes
That scream
For which you didn't want to forgive me

Letter 3

You were always annoyed by the abundance
Of things
Needed for sleep...pillows bedskirts
Night caps stiff from the starch
And sheets that displayed everything
Georg and one could see us
And in the end the aunts noticed

Then you went to the army and I
Straight into the hands of that butcher...
Don't call him my husband
I
Did not want him that big handed
German smelling like pigs feet with beer
Grabbing me with yells of victory

Now there are no pillows no night caps
It's good when there is a hard sofa
That's not him
Who breathes heavily over me every night
Taking what rightfully belongs to him
Not him but you Georg
And that's why I draw him to myself so
close with my thighs

Translated by Barbara Voit

Marta Brassart

The dance

To slip into skin of a suntanned dancer
To feel the frustration of being beautiful and lusted
after
And
Pain shooting out of burning foot
Up, an arrow through a cracked knee
Heart
Dry mouth, I fill them with water
Cross – not Lord's – my own
Loin barely upright
The rule number one:
Warlike in the world of peace:
Never give up
Head high
Hands up
No gravity – just pull.

Translated by Grzegorz Gaszczak

Michał Wroński

Ballerina

(for Eve Latała)

Ballerina

The daughter of Time

Danced without fatigue

According to the rhythm of the Sun

Without looking at the calendar

She danced without final

With closed curtain

From the beginning to start

Only time was her

Audience

And I sometimes

Peeping through a crack

In the curtain

Naked

Maybe one day I'll show

One important thought

Perhaps the most important

But she's naked

And do not want to wear

Even in the ethereal attire

Translated by Bozena Helena Mazur-Nowak

Mieczysław Wojtasik
ESCAPE

more and more prophets
vacate the town

tear back the bedclothes of adultery
with the muse of homelessness
and a faded blush
from teen girls' faces
trample on shy flames
of hearth and home

run panting heavily
towards a plain spread on its back

on the big river bank
they pour the sadness of locked hearts
out of amphorae

inspect each other in the sun
as washed horses

sink in the water up to their necks
ravenously quenching their thirst
for pure voice of destiny

Mieczysław Wojtasik
IN SEARCH FOR THE TRUTH

The poet Wojciech Sobecki
in one of his poems reveals
that hell has been always full of revellers
wallowing in frolics and debauchery.

Satan is very caring of his business.
Holds open days,
special offers.

To believe and believe not,
It is worth investigating.
The sacred principle..

If I am not back in time,
please write:
He surpassed himself.
Mieczysław Wojtasik

Mieczysław Wojtasik
OUT OF NOTHING

There is nothing under the yellow spot
of the eye of nature
neither fox-like greed
nor a tear over the history of a horse
come up in Turin
and in Bari

All is in the standby quantum of light
under the mother's eyelid
in the father's raise of hand
in the embodiments of bird routes

In the movement of a transparent thread
on the medium of NOTHING

Mira Łuksza

The place

This place follows me, wherever I go.

In my pockets I have remnants of ancient suns and new moons, an evening mist of a virgin forest dampens my hand hidden under a torn lining, covered from suspicious handshakes, shady smiles, where the coin has tarnished, the handkerchief has dried, and a scrap of a map to nowhere, because round here is the edge of the world.

Everywhere is the edge of the world, and the tops of my houses

turn with me, they always orient themselves to the east, like the house which remains alone, on the foundation made of stones,

gathered by the grandpa from the field, sold to strangers by the grandson.

What is mine here? A house, a boulder, a fence, a tree, a field and a road, that lead me, a sister blinded by the world, towards those like me.

Translated by Edyta Rosiak

Mira Łuksza
Białystok

I'm walking through the white city,
opening the wings of my arms.
Here, for a moment yet
you won't guess,
what wall has grown just behind the corner
built from the unified bricks,
whether that mask is a face
stripped from the personal skin,
or that face is a mask.
We hold all the colours
of the visible spectrum
in the young wings
and the old eyes.

Translated by Edyta Rosiak

Mira Łuksza

Ivan, Ivan,

Your ash trees can be seen even from a satellite,
against the dense wall of an old forest.

They are all you left behind, rescued from the slaughter,
and they shine in black Novembers with their bark so white,
and they leave reflections in the window glass voicelessly
staring

to the east. Once more I'll put my hands
under your grey hair, and I will close your blue eyes,
burnt with the fires of two wars, a revolution,
looking at the field they saw a sky full of larks.

You didn't save her, when she was led to the slaughter.
Sprinca from Narewka, a daughter of a tailor and a
bookbinder.

She lived in you till the end of the century. And you were
standing
in a black furrow, with a grain of rye in your hand,
with each new spring, with your face to the new east,
hoping for the birds to come home.

The war finished with no trace. Slabs on the slanting
Kirkut in Narewka grow into the ground. Sprinca
was dispelled by the wind in a foreign country all over the
world.

Sprinca lasted in you like a seed deprived of light,
and at the end of the world she pierced the blind eyelid.
She had frizzy hair, she was carrying hay for the horse
when you came to order summer suit.

Between the apple trees you could see Sprinca's head,
when with her basket she picked red apples for you.
You loved her. You would have saved more than your life.

Translated by Edyta Rosiak

Mira Łuksza
Wooden Street. Halina

She is creeping, no, no creeping,
She is pacing slowly but inevitably
with a smile on the eyeless face. No, it's not
a smile, it's a slot left by a knife
on the face with no lips. It's not a face, a surface,
which each of us wants to reveal and mitigate.
No – exculpate! This is she without mercy
mercifully given for pain and anguish, to give them. No, to
take them from you.
I won't take your pain away, I won't have on my forehead
your ruby blemish, because I'm already marked.
I'll stifle my tears. And I'll let them run through my burning
throat,
through that tunnel that lets the words fall out, the words
which were first
and the last, in the act and on the street, megapublicised.
Frozen in ears, not dead on paper, although motionless.

You turn tragedy into joke. You limit history with the metal
frames of your bed. A girl from the Third Lycee – you are
like that
again, your white hair rakishly sticks out
and your eyes shoot fireworks. Behind the frame – your
helpless son,
who believes in the word. And silence covers his mouth.
Speechless.
Not us? And there's no escape. There's no pity. Only loving.
The ruby mark on our skin and on all of those who see and
know.

Translated by Edyta Rosiak

Mira Łuksza
Staszica Street

A grey house, timbered, behind a wooden fence,
over the slag street bunches of lilac hung.
In the tailor's workshop of Mrs Gerasimczukowa,
Between the brickhouses of Miller and Paul,
I freeze in the half-light; above me a glass roof.
Dresses and heavy tailoring left this place a long time
ago –
coats, furcoats, pellisses, wadded jackets,
but noble fabrics' whispers and hisses,
rough touch of wool, leather scratching,
will lean out from the corners, settle on books,
will grow in like dust in millimeters of silence,
and behind the window the city goes to Bojary,
cement and marble encroach, and you won't step
on slag anymore, nor on sand or living grass.

Translated by Edyta Rosiak

Mirosław Majewski
A piece of his book

- It was I who killed Kostek...

- I'm listening... - she smoothed a strand of hair falling over her eyes.

- Oh! - she suddenly remembered something. - I forgot to brush my teeth... What are you talking about, Honey? - She turned towards her husband sitting on the edge of their bed.

- I can no longer live with it! - He looked into her dark, almost black, eyes.

- Wait a minute, I'll just go to the bathroom. - she sighed - Just don't fall asleep.

She left. Disappeared. As if she didn't exist.

- Is it really happening? - sighed Karl.

He thought he was the biblical Jacob fighting an angel.

Maybe he is the angel fighting against Jacob...

He wrestled with himself.

As always!

-I wonder if Jacob fighting the angel was already a Jew or if he became one later when he became lame? - He tried to put his thoughts into words. - Anyway, it doesn't matter now...

Doesn't matter.

Kostek...

He regretted mentioning him at all and hoped Marta wouldn't register what he said. It's good to have hope in such situations.

He opened the drawer of his bedside table and produced an old Ronson cigarette lighter and a pack of cigarettes from among an array of objects serving no apparent purpose.

He didn't smoke but he always had something, just in case.

Just like now.

He went out onto the balcony.

- Yes, it's good to have hope ... - he mumbled under his breath.

- Even on such an airless night like tonight... - he added, mingling the words with cigarette smoke.

And then he dissipated into the night with a Ronson cigarette lighter in hand.

Translated by Urszula Śledziewska- Bolinska