***Extra Credit for 4th semester ‘American Poetry’***

**Please choose 1 contemporary American poet from the list**

1. **Translate the poem into fluent Greek and**
2. **Translate the short bio of your chosen poet in Greek.**
3. **Let your classmates know your poet by posting a note to the e-class, so that you do not chose the same poet.**

**You need to turn in your work by June 5, during our class, in paper form and by email to** **lsakel@enl.uoa.gr**

**Your translation will get 1 point/10.**

**Best of luck,**

**L.S.**

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1. **Ariel Yelen (USA)**

**Prayer for tax season**

May I meet

the Dean’s corporate tactics

with the powerful

hush of a weeping

willow, May I

work and be

paid despite

poor

ergonomics and

poor economic

policy

May I pay my taxes

with the ease of one thousand

cherry blossoms raining

down, May publicity efforts

fail to show us the truth,

leaving us to figure it out

The shoulders of poets

hurt. May the future stay

fertile. The past is gone

**Ariel Yelen** is the author of *I Was Working* (Fall 2024), selected by Rowan Ricardo Phillips for the Princeton Series of Contemporary Poets. Herpoems have been published in *Poetry Magazine, BOMB, The American Poetry Review*, and elsewhere. She received a 2023-2024 Creative & Performing Arts Fulbright to Greece, as well as  from Fine Arts Work Center, Vermont Studio Center, The Yiddish Book Center, Art Farm & Arte Studio Ginestrelle. She lives and works in New York City.

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1. **Agnes Vojta (ΗΠΑ και Γερμανία)**

 **We didn’t think it would end like this**

Today is our anniversary. Our daughter sent flowers. I set them here by your bed. Look, I put on that dress you like, and the pearls. Do you remember how we used to go out for dinner? I should not be talking about food. You’re no longer eating. Does that make you sad?

Do you remember how we went to the opera? You looked so distinguished. How the guys at the reunion accused you of coloring your hair! Would you like me to put on a CD? Wagner perhaps, or Verdi? No? Don’t you want to say anything?

So nice that it was sunny today. We could lift you into the wheelchair to sit by the window.
That made you tired, didn’t it? There is somebody coming all the time, nurses, therapists. When they leave, you are exhausted and sleep. It is so quiet now. It is always so quiet.

I’ll go sit on the patio for a bit. I’ll be back in a while. Here, look at the flowers. Aren’t they lovely? Fifty-four years. We didn’t think it would end like this.

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1. **Janet Sutherland** **(Britain)**

**At Home 2020/3: Percutaneous Lung Biopsy 15th May 2020**

Before we head to CT where she’ll push a needle in my lung

the doctor asks me if I’ve seen it on a screen.

I answer–– that they let me know by phone––

because of COVID, I’ve been keeping safe.

She offers me a view. The PET scan of ten days ago

opens a window to my inner life. Drab is good,

in terms of diagnostics. We gaze together

at the swirls of force, the white explosive heat,

the supernova in my chest; its stubborn conflagrations.

**Janet Sutherland** is the author of five poetry collections, most recently The Messenger House (Shearsman Books, 2023). Her previous collections all from Shearsman are Home Farm (2019), Bone Monkey (2014), Hangman’s Acre (2009) and Burning the Heartwood (2006).   The Messenger House, a hybrid collection, is about her great-great-grandfather’s travels to Serbia in the 1840’s with his friend Mr Gutch, a Queen’s Messenger. Her poems are widely anthologised and published in magazines such as New Statesman, The Spectator and The North.  She won the 2017 Kent and Sussex Poetry Prize and received a Hawthornden Fellowship for 2018.  She has an MA in American Poetry and lives in Lewes, East Sussex. <https://www.janetsutherland.co.uk/>

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1. **Gill Smith (USA)**

a sparrow flies

into the window I sit in front of

the magenta

curtain curdles

carpet warehouse

 promotion depression

 gas pump cluster

 I have the gift of symptoms

 as seen on TV

 the knife will cut

 through a penny

 many are emptied

 by the state then

 again by the lack

 of a state

 cat with arched back

 kneads paws on cushion

 to conjure its mother

 the first person

 was a mistake which

 carried in context

 alleviates some pain

**Gill Smith** is a writer living in New York. His poetry has appeared in Poem-a-Day, Conjunctions, Washington Square Review, No Dear, Prelude, and Epiphany. He teaches writing at CUNY and is a psychoanalyst-in-formation.

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1. **DON SCHOFIELD (ΗΠΑ και Ελλάδα)**

**From “AFTER THE FIRESTORMS”**

He shuffled down the driveway just past dawn,

leaned his walker against my rented car,

gave me a long, deep hug, a quick kiss, told me

he loves me, made me promise to visit more often.

Now I see him in my rear-view mirror,

hobbling back up the drive, his face almost golden

in the slanting light. I may never see him again,

I think, as I pass the market, the gas station, turn left

and I’m gone. Can I keep the heartfelt alive, memories

from slipping into shadowy oblivion?

Surely I’ll remember last night, helping him from the bathtub,

his soft, pale skin scarred from operations, accidents,

fights in his youth, cuts and lumps from his years

in restaurants and construction, one or two self-inflicted.

His body in that harsh bathroom light is white

as marble, Pentelic marble, used by the ancients

for statues, temples and sarcophagi.

Born in Nevada and raised in California, **Don Schofield** is a graduate of the University of Montana (MFA, 1980).  A resident of Greece for over four decades, he has taught literature and creative writing at American, British and Greek universities, and traveled extensively throughout Europe, the Middle East and farther afield.  Fluent in Greek, a citizen of both his homeland and his adopted country, he is the editor of the anthology *Kindled Terraces:  American Poets in Greece*(Truman State University Press), and has published six books of poetry in the US, the first of which, *Approximately Paradise* (University Press of Florida), was a finalist for the Walt Whitman Award, and a more recent collection, *In Lands Imagination Favors*(Dos Madres Press), reached the final round for the Rubery Book Award (UK).  His translations of contemporary Greek poets have been honored by the London Hellenic Society, shortlisted for the Greek National Translation Award and nominated for a Pushcart Prize.  Poems from his latest book, *A Different Heaven: New & Selected Poems* (Dos Madres Press) have also been nominated for a Pushcart Prize. He currently lives in both Athens and Thessaloniki.

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1. **Nikola Madzirov**

WHEN TIME CEASES

We are the remnants of another age.

That’s why I cannot speak

of home, or death

or preordained pains.

Not one illicit digger so far

has found the walls between us,

or the chill in the bones

in the remnants of all the ages.

When time ceases,

then we’ll talk about the truth

and the fireflies will form constellations

on our foreheads.

Not one false prophet

foresaw the shattering of a glass

or the touch of two palms –

two great truths, from which

clear water flows.

We are the remnants of another age.

Like wolves in the sights of eternal guilt

we are withdrawing

into the landscapes of tamed solitude.

**Nikola Madžirov** (poet, essayist, prose writer, translator) was born in 1973 in Strumica. When he was 18, the collapse of Yugoslavia prompted a shift in his sense of identity – as a writer reinventing himself in a country which felt new but was still nourished by deeply rooted historical traditions. His poems are translated into more than forty languages. For the book *Relocated Stone* (2007) was given the international *Hubert Burda* poetry award for the writers born in Central and East Europe and *Miladinov Brothers* poetry award at *Struga Poetry Evenings*. Other recognitions include *Studentski Zbor* award for best poetry debut, the main international award at the *Orpheus* Poetry Festival in Plovdiv and *Xu Zhimo Silver Leaf* award for European poetry at King’s College, Cambridge in UK. American composer and collaborator of Björk and Lou Reed — Oliver Lake, the founder of “Snarky Puppy” — Michael League and Becca Stevens have composed music based on Madžirov's poems. He was granted the following international fellowships: *International Writing Program* (IWP) at University of Iowa; *DAAD* and *LCB* in Berlin; *Marguerite Yourcenar* in France; *Civitella Ranieri* in Italy; *Yaddo* and *MacDowell* in US. Nikola Madžirov is coordinator of the international poetry network *Lyrikline*, based in Berlin. He edited the *Anthology of World’s Poetry: XX and XXI Century* and translated Louise Glück, Yehuda Amichai, Vasko Popa, Georgi Gospodinov, Ilya Kaminsky, Serhiy Zhadan, Slavenka Drakulić, Li-Young Lee and many others. He was member of the jury for *The Griffin International Poetry Prize 2023*. He lives in the city of his birth.

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1. **CYNTHIA HOGUE (USA)**

**The Body in Pain**

*One property of poetic language is to engage with states*

*that themselves would deprive us of language and reduce us*

*to passive sufferers.*

 Adrienne Rich

Unkempt bathe trudge

as if with marshland feet

sink

down,

down,

loud sucking noise.

Stuck.

Needing strength

to

emerge determined to

climb out in spite of =

living

delicately

close

to leaf-trodden and

rarest fern (foraged

to nourish,

oddly

found near the rickety fence

wound with pink impatiens.

You’re

alone in

knowing your

limbs are

askew,

dis-

jointed in ways

that can’t be fixed =

the price

you’ve paid

in pain

to redeem

in

words).

**Cynthia Hogue**’s tenth poetry collection is *instead, it is dark* (Red Hen Press, 2023). Her ekphrastic Covid chapbook is entitled *Contain* (Tram Editions 2022), and her third collaborative translation from the French of Nicole Brossard is *Distantly* (Omnidawn 2022). Among her honors are a Fulbright Fellowship to Iceland, two NEA Fellowships, and the Harold Morton Landon Translation Award from the Academy of American Poets. Hogue was the inaugural Maxine and Jonathan Marshall Chair in Modern and Contemporary Poetry at Arizona State University. She lives in Tucson. Her website is: <https://cynthiahogue.com/>

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1. **Tess Gallagher (USA)**

**The Women of Auschitz**

were not treated so well as I.
I am haunted by their shorn heads,
their bodies more naked for this
as they stumble against each other
in those last black-and-white
moments of live footage.

Before she cuts the braid
Teresa twines the red ribbon
bordered with gold into my hair.
The scissors stutter against the thick
black hank of it, though for its part,
the hair is mute.

When it was done
to them they stood next to each other.
Maybe they leaned
into each other’s necks afterwards. Or
simply gazed back with the incredulity
of their night-blooming souls.

Something silences us.
Even the scissors, yawing at
the anchor rope, can’t find their sound.
They slip against years as if they were bone.
I recall an arm-thick rope I saw in China
made entirely of women’s hair, used to anchor
a ship during some ancient war
when hemp was scarce.

At last the blades come together
like the beak of a metallic stork,
delivering me into my new form.
The braid-end fresh and bloodless.
Preempting the inevitable,
Teresa uses the clippers to buzz off
the rest. Breath by plover-breath,
hair falls to my shoulders, onto the floor, onto
my feet, left bare for this occasion.

As the skull comes forward,
as the ghost ship
of the cranium, floating
in its newborn ferocity, forces through,
we are in no doubt: the helm
of death and the helm of life
are the same, each craving light.

She sweeps the clippings onto the dust pan
and casts them from the deck
into the forest. Then, as if startled awake,
scrambles down the bank
to retrieve them, for something live
attaches to her sense of hair, after
a lifetime cutting it.

I am holding nothing back.
Besides hair, I will lose toenails, fingernails,
eyelashes and a breast to the ministrations
of medicine. *First you must make
the form,* Setouchi-san tells me, explaining
why the heads of Buddhist nuns are shaved.
The shape is choosing me, simplifying,
shaving me down to essentials,
and I go with it. Those women
of Auschwitz who couldn’t choose—
Meanwhile the war plays out
in desert cities, the news shorn of images
of death and dismemberment.

I make visible the bare altar
of the skull.
Time is deepened. Space
more intimate than
I guessed. I run my hand over
the birth-moment I attend sixty years
after. I didn’t know the women
would be so tender. Teresa takes my
photograph in Buddha Alcove, as if to prove
the passage has been safe. Holly, Jill, Dorothy,
Alice, Suzie, Chana, Debra, Molly and Hiromi offer flowers
and a hummingbird pendant, letting me know
they are with me. My sister
is there and Rijl.

I feel strangely gentled, glimpsing
myself in the mirror, the artifact
of a country’s lost humility.
My moon-smile, strange and far,
refuses to belong to the cruelties
of ongoing war. I am like a madwoman
who has been caught eating pearls—softly radiant,
about to illuminate a vast savanna, ready
to work a miracle with everything left to her.

**Tess Gallagher,** who lives in Port Angeles, Washington, is a poet, essayist, novelist, and playwright. Her work includes nine books of poetry and two novels, *The Lover of Horses* (1986) and *At the Owl Woman Saloon*(1996). She has received a Guggenheim Foundation fellowship; two National Endowment for the Arts awards; the Maxine Cushing Gray Foundation award; and the Elliston award for the "best book of poetry published by a small press" (the collection *Instructions to the Double*). She has taught at numerous colleges, most recently at Bucknell University and Whitman College.

Gallagher is also the author of *Midnight Lantern: New and Selected Poems*(2011) and *IS, IS NOT*(2019), a book of poems dedicated to, and in deep conversation with, Gallagher’s long-term companion, the Irish painter and storyteller Josie Gray.

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1. **Christina Daub (USA)**

**Morphine**

Between healing and dying

the cells waver,

in flux with the blood's

white and red tiles.

The waiting rooms spill

with stasis. The lives in magazines.

All is what might be, glossy,

untouchable, fluorescent,

the starched and bleached words

of the lab coat gods.

Life still throbs in the veins,

splits your papery skin.

The cure is poison,

but the ghost cells evade it.

The cure is radiation.

Nuclear. All out retaliation.

The cure is positive thinking.

Alternative everything, anything.

If the body knows what to do

to heal itself, then why

are you the reflection

of the doctor's stare, blank

as the white wall behind him.

He ordains a prescription,

but neither of us know

if it’s for healing or dying.

**Christina Daub** is a Pushcart Prize nominated poet with work in *The Connecticut Review, The Cortland Review, Kenyon Review, Poet Lore, Potomac Review, Stone Circle Review*and many others. She also translates poetry from Spanish and German into English. She has taught poetry and creative writing at various schools in the DC area, including George Washington University, The Writer’s Center, and in the poets-in-the-schools program. She co-founded *The Plum Review* along with its reading series and annual retreats.  You  can find her at [christinadaub.com](http://christinadaub.com/), christinadaub.bsky.social and @flix2fly on

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1. **Daniela Danz (Germany)**

**Do I Have the Words**

do I have words like swallows

to loop between

the invisible and being light

do I have to be light

do I have enough that is heavy

too little that is heavy enough to carry it

I carry my swallow through the summer

with inflamed vertebrae

she lies on my shoulder and is amazed

do I have to be sad

have I ever carried anything lighter

than this obstinate swallow?

**Translated from the German by** [**Monika Cassel**](https://www.lyrikline.org/de/uebersetzerinnen/details/3564)

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1. **Elizabeth Cohen** **(ΗΠΑ)**

**Bone on Bone**

We are bones.
You, me, everyone.
Assembling and dissembling rocky ledges,
cantilevered scapula, the 33 individual parapets of spines.

Today it's come down to the failure of a knee.
"It's bone on bone," the doctor says. Bone did its best, she explains,
but now it's faltering. Bone is speaking to bone.

Bone talks about the ancestors, the ones driven into dust by Cossacks.
Bone remembers every single moment of that, in high detail.
 Bone is telling bone the news of the day:
A war is beginning, There has been a hurricane.

Bone knows we are permeable.
Calcium.
Salt.
Dream.
Bone knows that I smoked for a decade under the Corrales bridge.
Bone knows all the things we ate at the Frontier Diner.
All the places we walked in Greece.
Specifically, it knows about how I fell on the tiny rock beach
on the island of Serifos, skinned my knees.

Bone has heard all the arguments about the future.
The future of democracy.
The future of the future.
The future of sex.

In the interest of open disclosure I already know what my bones know.
I know my bones are melting, like my mothers.
In the interest of open disclosure, I was already drifting away from myself in 7th grade, when I started my period. And further, at 39, when I parted my legs to release my daughter into the bright light of that room on the 27th floor
of the same hospital where pieces of my son were scraped out from inside me two years earlier. I am their bones , they are mine.

In the interest of open disclosure we are all bones, breaking, cracking, bending. We are all of us dying, always. Drifting away from our better selves.

In the interest of open disclosure, we have always been dying. What a beautiful circuitous ride it will be, to the last place where we’ll drop these bones off forever.

In the interest of open disclosure, I love you.

This is not a sad story. I forbid you to cry.

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1. **Aliki Barnstone (ΗΠΑ)**

Elegy for Michelle Beginning

with One of Her Last Lines

*So let’s walk the ruins, let’s walk along the ocean*

*and listen to death’s undying devotion.*

*—Michelle Boisseau, 1955-2017*

I’ve listened to death’s undying devotion

too long now, Michelle, written elegies,

as if poetry were life in slow motion,

could fool death, the goal of theologies.

I’m the fool taking our decade for granted.

Down the road in KC is a shared meal,

our leaning close for warmth, political rants, and

wry wit. Your eyes. Sad sweet eyes. I could feel

your despair—winter yearly dims the light.

How could I miss that you were deathly sick?

Why did I not hear the voice of your life

growing silent? Your tissues growing thick

with tumors? Friend, did cold take your last breath,

as undying skeletal trees attest?

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1. [**Elizabeth Alexander**](https://poets.org/poet/elizabeth-alexander)

*Equinox*

Now is the time of year when bees are wild
and eccentric. They fly fast and in cramped
loop-de-loops, dive-bomb clusters of conversants
in the bright, late-September out-of-doors.
I have found their dried husks in my clothes.

They are dervishes because they are dying,
one last sting, a warm place to squeeze
a drop of venom or of honey.
After the stroke we thought would be her last
my grandmother came back, reared back and slapped

a nurse across the face. Then she stood up,
walked outside, and lay down in the snow.
Two years later there is no other way
to say, we are waiting. She is silent, light
as an empty hive, and she is breathing.

**Elizabeth Alexander** was born on May 30, 1962, in Harlem, New York, and grew up in Washington, D.C. She received a BA from Yale University, an MA from Boston University (where she studied with [Derek Walcott](https://poets.org/poet/derek-walcott)), and a PhD in English from the University of Pennsylvania. Alexander has been a fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University, and at the Whitney Humanities Center at Yale University. She previously served as the Thomas E. Donnelley Professor of African American Studies and inaugural Frederick Iseman Professor of Poetry at Yale University, and the Wun Tsun Tam Mellon Professor in the Humanities at Columbia University. She served as [Chancellor](https://poets.org/academy-american-poets/chancellors) of the Academy of American Poets from 2015 to 2020. She is the current President of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and lives in New York City.

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**Find 1 poem of theirs that explores physical pain:**

1. Anne Boyer’s [The Undying](https://bookshop.org/p/books/the-undying-pain-vulnerability-mortality-medicine-art-time-dreams-data-exhaustion-cancer-and-care-anne-boyer/10360108?gclid=Cj0KCQiA7aSsBhCiARIsALFvovxYoIrhlDkJceL1dLhGCKtAinO5EZ9KuHkzKfcVb1MemKgO3zXHnZoaAph3EALw_wcB)
2. Ted Rees’s book [Thanksgiving](https://www.goliasbooks.com/thanksgiving)
3. [Kadijah Queen](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/khadijah-queen)
4. Simone White
5. Fanny Howe
6. Ana Bozicevic
7. Farnoosh Fahti
8. Stacy Szymaszek
9. Maged Zaher
10. Fred Moten
11. Dorothea Lasky
12. Alice Notely
13. Renee Gladman
14. Lisa Robertson
15. Matthea Harvey
16. Wayne Koestenbaum
17. Bhanu Kapil

Brenda Shaughnessy

Cathy Park Hong

John Keene

Ariana Reines

Anselm Berrigan

Srikanth Reddy

Emily Luan (a close friend)

Tracy Fuad (a close friend)

Corina Copp

Peter Gizzi

Mary Ruefle