

# 2RV

18.4 (Summer 2014)

# The 2River View

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2River

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new poems by

Bradley J. Fest, Kathryn Haemmerle, April Krivensky  
Kristin LaFollette, Michael Lauchlan, Gloria Monaghan  
Darren Morris, Sherry O'Keefe, Jacqueline Dee Parker,  
Sally Van Doren, Kami Westhoff



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## **About the Artist**

Residing and working in Maine since 1984, Heidi Daub exhibits her paintings throughout New England, abroad, and online. Daub's art reflects her involvement in various artistic disciplines and her reverence for the natural world. Her paintings are housed nationally in private and corporate collections.

Cover: *The Swimmer*, acrylic on panel, 10" X 8"  
Contents page: *House of Sun*, acrylic on paper, 24" x 19"  
Contributors page: *The Layered Forest*, acrylic on paper, 34" x 48"

Heidi Daub  
[www.heidaub.com](http://www.heidaub.com)

## **About 2River**

Since 1996, 2River has been a site of poetry and art, quarterly publishing *The 2River View* and occasionally publishing individual authors in the 2River Chapbook Series. 2River is also the home of Muddy Bank, the 2River blog.

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Kristin LaFollette teaches English and humanities to college students in northern Indiana where she lives with her husband.

Michael Lauchlan has poems in the *The Cortland Review*, *New England Review*, *The North American Review*, and *Virginia Quarterly*. *Trumbull Ave.* is forthcoming from WSU Press.

Gloria Monaghan is an Associate Professor at Wentworth Institute in Boston. Her work has appeared in *Aries*, *Slope*, and *Spoonful*. In 2012, Finishing Line Press published her chapbook *Flawed*.

Darren Morris has published poems and stories. Another poem currently appears in *New Ohio Review*.

Sherry O'Keefe is the author of *Cracking Geodes Open* and *Making Good Use of August*. She has recent poetry and prose at *Camas: the Nature of the West*, *Escape Into Life*, and *PANK*.

Jacqueline Dee Parker is an artist, poet, and instructor of art at Louisiana State University. Her mixed media paintings reside in private and corporate collections around the US and her poems appear in journals such as *Atlanta Review*, *E-ratio*, *The Cortland Review*, *Chelsea*, and *The Southern Review*.

Sally Van Doren is the author of *Possessive* (LSU Press 2012) and *Sex at Noon Taxes*, (LSU Press 2008), which received the Walt Whitman Award from the Academy of American Poets. She lives in St. Louis and New York City.

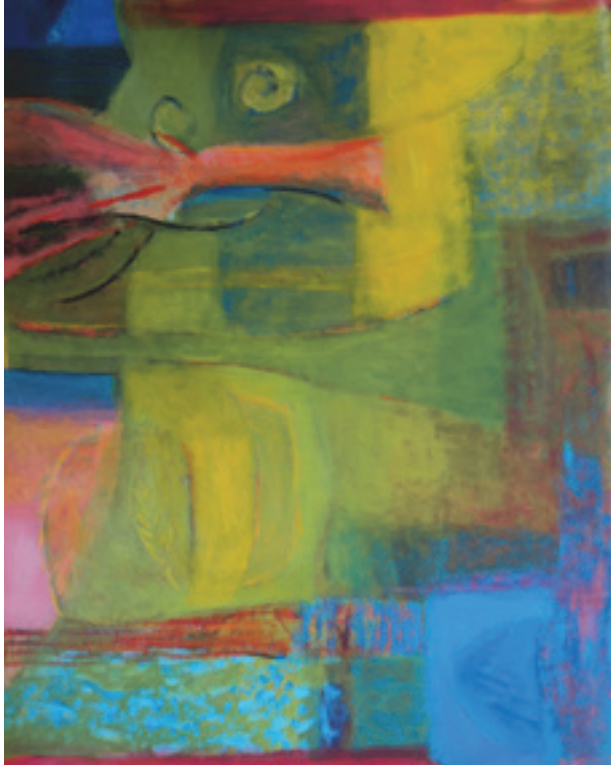
Kami Westhoff teaches Creative Writing at Western Washington University. Her work has appeared in journals such as *Carve*, *The Madison Review*, *Meridian*, *Phoebe*, and *Third Coast*.

## Contributors

Bradley J. Fest Bradley J. Fest is a Visiting Lecturer at the University of Pittsburgh. His poems have appeared in various journals, and his essays have been published in *boundary 2*, *The Silence of Fallout*, and elsewhere. He blogs at The Hyperarchival Parallax.

Kathryn Haemmerle holds a bachelor's degree in English literature and creative writing from Saint Mary's College in South Bend, Indiana. She now resides in Boston. The two poems published here are from her collection *Aperture*.

April Krivensky studies at the University of Illinois Urbana—Champaign. Her work has been featured in *Bluepepper*, *Lake City Lights*, and *The Orange Room Review*. Her mother and older sister are her biggest heroes for all their support and endless love.



April Krivensky

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## The Last After

Rain slicks the stairs into liability.

The mother clutches the railing with one hand, its paint flecks her glove. The top stair receives her foot like playdough. Her infant daughter grunts, frees a fist from the swaddle. Her tongue clicks against the roof of her mouth. Before the mother can will it otherwise, milk surges from duct to capillary to nipple, wastes itself on the cottony cups of her bra.

He has asked to see her one more time. Before what, she isn't sure. She has seen so many afters with him. Face down on their wedding night, sure she would rip in two. Neighbor girls hurried away from hopscotch and jump ropes and blowing bubbles so big gum stuck to their eyelashes when they burst. His younger sister, hunched like a haunted to the *It's a girl*.

Inside, he serves lukewarm coffee while she nurses the baby. He cracks shells and clinks almonds, which he says are good for milk production, into a bowl beside her. She hesitates, having read somewhere they contain arsenic. Or was it ammonia? The daughter pulls her head from her nipple as if she has something to say. The mother positions the baby on the other breast, its mouth receives the nipple, and the milk bursts into her mouth like the answer to a question someone finally asked.

*Kami Westhoff*

### **Butcher Day**

Today is butcher day. Clover drags her impossible tongue over the salt lick, slips it into one then the other nostril. Our dog, Blackie, burrows into a bone from last night's roast, her teeth clunk low and wet until the marrow offers. Neither notice the white truck back into the driveway, hear the crackle of my father unfolding the enormous blue tarp, smoothing it flat against the concrete floor of the barn. My father pours grain into a bucket and gives it to my sister, who unlatches the fence and steps toward Clover, her boots slip and slurp in the muddy field. Clover sways her slow and heavy hips toward my sister, lowers her head to the grain. The handle of the bucket eeks as her tongue sweeps the grain into her mouth.

Today we are eight and twelve, and don't yet know there is never enough time to be forgiven. In a couple months, our neighbor will force his penis into my sister's mouth. In five years, she will be raped so brutally nine stitches will be needed to make the one back into two. I will misunderstand these things, call her a slut, tell everyone about the ½ in our sisterhood I'd never before thought to mention. She will learn to be quiet, and understand a man only by the things he can't help himself from doing. But today I watch her feed Clover one last meal. And when she is hoisted onto the butcher's hook, slit open, and that intricate and beautiful system of life releases onto the tarp, we hold hands and stand so close the tiny hairs on our skinny legs rise and rest as one.

*Bradley J. Fest*

### **One Summer Near Niagara**

Thrown in the way of that never forgotten nunnery, the wife in her cooking apron came out to taste the needles when the rains came that year, and she only remembered twisting her arms through the blender while martini mistaken water wound down the steps.

So cold was the thought of the languid mop to wash the blood up; tiny sea anemones waded their way into the backbone of the turkey breast.

Blue trellises in the wake of this wayward household held so gently vines air-brushed a signifying gray; those little roods let the conversion of earth snake up them toward the rafters, toward the rain ducts.

So much liquid washed through that apron one summer, a river, Lethe, could have passed unnoticed in that night impregnated with steam and soiled blue jeans. Finally, her first born would come over the ridge, comprehending all the contents of his living room in a glance.

The mop felt akin to the trellis that summer, their wood clutched so tightly in the palm of something new to be added to the spinning globe.

Kathryn Haemmerle

### 1. (n.) the space through which light passes

in any optical instrument. An opening that limits the quantity of light that can enter an object. Or a tent, a street. At night there are only lanterns. They line the fairground streets that lead to whirring blaze of rides and carnival sick-smells on Calle del Infierno. A man and woman cannot remember how to use words. Instead they construct images from bent light, guessing the secrets of lanterns strung above. They stand apart facing each other, dressed like a flamenco dancer and nineteenth century Andalusian horseman. She avoids his gaze by turning toward a girl taking a photo of the neon green algodón stand. The woman imagines herself appearing in the photo, grotesque and distorted in filtered glare. She hates how the man stands beneath the white string of paper lanterns, face overexposed and ethereal. He convinces. When she observes his stare and feels the pressure of his fingers underexposed in tenderness on her skin, she knows that if he could speak he'd say,  
*It's never about what you want.*

Sally Van Doren

### Justice

The devil trains mother  
To train her troubled son  
To use a semiautomatic rifle  
And he shoots her first  
  
In the face before he opens  
Fire on the elementary school.  
(Father and brother spared,  
Having long since fled the dirtied  
Nest.) In his memoirs, the devil cites  
As one of his greatest achievements  
The introduction of war weapons  
As recreational toys in broken  
*Suburban households. That,*  
And the deprivation of the  
Rights of a six-year-old  
To advance to the second grade.



Sally Van Doren

## High Priestess

Shuffle the deck and watch  
The cards fall from the tower  
Into a hostile auditorium

Filled with truth vandals.  
Don't leap after them.  
Clutch your stodgy

Lie receptacles as you  
Traverse the littered  
Maze and pluck each

Card out of the mouth  
Of its perpetrator.  
Congratulate yourself

For hatching a plan that  
Circumvents your own pain.  
Then, start to slobber

As your endorphins  
Die down and the bile  
Froths up over the seat

Cushions in the amphitheater.  
Your face wet. Your pants  
Wet. Nobody there to dry you.

Kathryn Haemmerle

## 2. (n.) an open space between

Portions of solid matter. A gap. Or chasm. Orifice. Cleft.  
Hole. *Abyss. In some Writers of Geometry, the Inclination, or Leaning of one Right-line towards another, which meet in a point and make an Angle.* A woman stands between towns on the shore that belongs to no one and contemplates her will. February wind howls until ears ring raw and sting, then disfigures the dunes until right-lines and wrong-lines lean everywhere. Cold white sand rises in particle clouds that link solid walls with nothing. Nearby, a man fly-fishes. His uncertain flicks measure the depth of field with nylon line. He rarely hooks a fish. When he does, they are choked by plastic soda rings. The woman examines what the fisherman does not want. Decayed driftwood.

Fish with empty eyes and harsh mouths, bellies hardened by salt. Sometimes, algal blooms wash up like fringes of ripped sun on water. Or, illusory halos around a source. Chromatic aberrations.

No light reaches the abyssal zone. All creatures stare back at the woman, as if through the pinhole mouth of a mollusk shell.

*April Krivensky*

### **Print**

We fed you typewriter keys and pumpkin seeds.  
Took you on long drives to local murky ponds.  
The three of us nicked and dimed our way through aeronautics  
while exploring the ideologies of tuna casserole  
and cheese omelets.

In Nevada your throat feels itchy.  
Harsh. Bark.  
Hugging your uvula in chicken pox.  
Brittle bones line the inside of your posture.  
Brittle neurons never make you smile anymore.  
70% tape. 30% eyeglasses.  
What is so difficult about staying vertical?  
A horse on a carousel keeps its balance.

One speed down Superior.  
A fixed gear bike carries me like a sack  
of potatoes over its shoulder.  
From when I can't make it from the toilet to the bed.  
From when I fall asleep on the couch and the t.v is still on.  
The florescent an indicator that we care about  
some things.

Gums bleeding.  
Cotton under my fingernails.  
He ropes through my mane and I pretend to be sleeping.  
A bed of pockets where I can rest with the lint.  
I am the jellyfish.  
You are the salt water.

*Jacqueline Dee Parker*

### **The Guild House Elegey**

Balanced at the top  
rung of the ladder  
he fastened  
flocked globes  
to the ceiling's scaffold  
with lengths of invisible string  
as outside that window  
she grew up inside  
snow swirled on the green's  
three stone churches,  
blinking pizzarias.  
In the display she sat  
cross with equations,  
studying pedestrians  
on the other side of glass  
bluster past in knit caps,  
crowns of crystals fluffed,  
dollops of whipping cream,  
clutching satchels  
in the rush hour  
city buses hissed  
to stops.  
Around the block  
the Schubert's pit orchestra  
tuned while here her father,  
bent on design scored  
triangles in matboard  
soon pyramids  
filling the floor,  
a cubist forest  
he trimmed with untold  
measures of red- and  
gold-flecked stars.

*Jacqueline Dee Parker*

### **The Arboretum**

One in four who marry  
here in spring may after  
honor seasons of rabbits  
and buried pets, supper parties,  
piano lessons, bad debt.  
May toss coins, read runes,  
root for trophies and brighter smiles,  
bear sacrifices so hard  
they ferry a garlicky scent.

Burning wicks, may bolster  
or suffer attachment, hip  
to hip, night by every goddamn day.

May tear greens and pick  
at the cosmos, dig impatiens  
in the sweet bay magnolia's shade.

May parlay time to err,  
ears cocked, cottoning to winks  
on cue leave the table,  
mashing grasses  
in a far field,  
flush, another hand—

may later spot the evening  
primrose glimmer, his or her  
tongue tingling with bitters.

*April Krivensky*

### **Delta Wave**

Sunday consisted of two things:  
death and bicycles.

My dog lays dying on the front yard and I'm watching  
from my father's bay window.  
Donald took a shot gun to its skull and proceeded to walk  
back in.  
Loading again, he says "You know this next one is for me, right?"  
Now my dad and dog are both laying  
on the front yard and all the sudden I'm on a bicycle trying to  
pick it up to get over a two foot wooden wall.  
Everything was so heavy.  
Everything was so heavy.

I sweat through my shirt that night.  
I was more upset about my dog.

Kristin LaFollette

### Careful Examination

One night I dreamt of  
trees and  
danger and that my  
spine had been opened up  
and examined.

I dreamt of my father  
in a forest  
and spinal surgery  
where someone else  
was being examined  
while the seasons  
changed outside.  
It was October but  
it was still hot and rainy  
and

I dreamt about children  
trick-or-treating in  
orange costumes  
but my brother wasn't  
one of them.

I dreamt that he was a  
scarecrow, standing  
alone in a field.

Sherry O'Keefe

### Breakfast at the Owl Café

Life is the story of bodies that learned to contain the sea.  
*William Bryant Logan*

He'll come down from the mountain  
every fifth Sunday in June to sip  
coffee from a hot spoon. This time  
you'll tell him *you are learning*  
to *contain the sea*. These words—  
out loud and yes, he'll listen, balancing  
his spoon on the thick saucer,  
the sound pleasing to a quiet room.  
He'll study you, but measure?  
No. He's the sort to consider: you are  
not divisible. Last time he was the one  
to talk of replacing starting with learning.  
Butter melting on hot cakes, lemon zinging  
on your tongues, each breakfast must be  
lasting. His is a name you'll never write  
on a photo. There's no need to work at remembering  
him. Like iron dissolving in water, the browns  
and reds remain. And when he leaves,  
you'll see him off with a casual wave.  
The way a burro's tail swishes once.  
*Calm. Steady. Stay.*

*Sherry O'Keefe*

### **Watercolors Need to Avoid Direct Sunlight**

for N

It's been so long since she knew blue  
& how it spreads when dropped  
where sky breaks into sea.

She writes. Says she forgets now  
which hand to use when she paints.

Orange begonias need shade, too,  
I reply. I slide them, in a pot,  
beneath the spruce tree in my front yard.

Shadows deepen the shock of color,  
is the last that she writes back.

*Kristin LaFollette*

### **Enzymes**

I dreamt that an  
x-ray  
showed my  
heart  
was missing

I wish I could see through your  
eyes  
that are sometimes  
green  
and sometimes  
brown  
like you might be two people at once

Like you might have two  
hearts  
crushed together in the same cavity

As if you regenerate, like a  
liver

*Michael Lauchlan*

### **Hunger Lake**

Riding updrafts. hawks  
circle. Geese peck in mud,  
and a swallow flaps low  
across the water. I stare  
from a dock, dazed  
by high sun. In distant  
shallows, a gray ball  
unfurls into a slender S  
and stands like a delft  
vase that survived the war.  
The stance suits a heron.

Last night, unquiet,  
I paced and stewed.  
I may watch the heron  
until wings open and  
she rises to the tree  
where she worked last  
March, receiving sticks  
and reeds from her mate,  
shaping them into a nest.  
I still won't get it,  
but I admire what I least

resemble. Not an ache  
spreading to weary legs  
and glassy eyes, not hunger  
that sharpens action or kills  
it altogether--mine lurks  
like desire for fish that  
never swam this lake.  
No heron squirms while

*Darren Morris*

### **Walking Out**

The force of one's will is simply  
the force of the universe, no greater,  
no less, and perhaps something,  
though we cannot see it. It must exist.  
The soft heaving of joy when it afflicts,  
or the way a sob might transcend  
our wretchedness. For me, let it be  
the single dog pack of moonlight  
that has made its way to earth, cut  
by the thin, frozen fingers of the trees.

*Darren Morris*

### **Rumors of Existence**

When things get really bad  
I think of orbital mechanics  
and the great hives of winter  
stars. And flying forty thousand  
feet over an icy planet  
into the godless nature of god.  
The little ferry boats of light  
we sometimes glimpse below,  
by circumstance of cloudlessness,  
are, in reality, entire towns,  
just as with the last candle flicker  
of a memory before it is replaced,  
sometimes by nothing more  
than another passenger  
adjusting her sleep, snuffing  
the reading light above us, and  
the dark whisper that rushes in.

*Michael Lauchlan*

awaiting a rising glint.  
I'll learn her pose and  
hunt the fish that come.

### **Sketch**

A seated model shown  
from the side, an old  
painter and, on the easel,  
his image of her from the front.  
In the sketch, the model thinks  
that it's getting cold, that the late light  
softening makes him look at her  
even more intently, painting, then  
stopping to scratch on a pad.  
When he comes closer, holding the brush  
like a baton, she can smell garlic  
from lunch. He liked the fish  
more than she and ate with abandon,  
and now his breath is too rank  
too close. She fights the impulse  
to shift when he comes near. So much  
has been done in the last hours  
and she'd hate to break the spell,  
fearing that he'll scrape the canvas bare  
and begin again from nothing.  
She's seen that worn look  
twist itself into his face,  
so she slows her breath and lets  
the meager light take her shape.

*Gloria Monaghan*

### **Torero**

The tip of your sword glittered in the sun  
your white teeth catch the light  
the gold buttons of your coat spun

into your body barely pressing against the sweating side of the bull  
the small swords stick out of his sides like an indication  
your dance with him; a spectacle

you push your body into the sweating side of the black bull  
the swords pin him and decorate his massive strength  
your arms bent behind you like a dancing woman. The lull

of the afternoon settles into the dust  
flies hover over the sweat of the bull and the sweat on your brow  
your bright red muleta flies over his body like a flower of lust.

Your hands are smeared with the blood of the bull  
It is your second kill today. The stands scream with terror and glee.  
The dust flies and settles on your black shoes. The black bull  
is dying. It is four o'clock.  
You don't look at the crowd.

You give them nothing of your face, nothing to mock

only your body as you swing and unfurl  
your cape, moving slowly beyond fear in and out of the path of the bull  
without really ever changing position, your arms as graceful as a girl.

You love the black bull and your dance is death  
and you know he will have you  
eventually. But now you move with grace and stealth

*Gloria Monaghan*

the gold buttons gleam, the red muleta flutters  
sweat draws down your back onto your backside  
an old woman proceeds to her window and shuts the shutters.

### **Veronica**

*Veronica* (n) a pass the torero makes at the bull  
to bring him closer to the bullfighter's body

Every day I practice the steps over and over  
every day I move in and out of your path in my mind

My arms make the motion with the cape in my hands above you  
in the night over her, I make a mistake and am thinking of you  
my bull  
my darkness from the Miura family  
the one that will come for me with its heavy crooked horn.

I try and laugh it off.  
I joke to my banderillos.  
They smile, but their eyes see me  
in my suit of light.

Every day I practice the steps over and over  
every time I see her my heart moves away a little.