



**New European Poetry: Landscapes of Place, Identity and Memory**

A Camden Conference Community Event

Sponsored by the Cushing Library

On Zoom, November 21, 2022, 2 – 4pm

Poems Selected by Ellen Goldsmith  
from *New European Poets*, edited by Wayne Miller and Kevin Pruffer, Graywolf Press

## European Poetry: Landscapes of Place, Identity and Memory

Susana Hancock	Trekways of the Wind by Nils Aslak Valkeapää translated by Lars Nordström, Ralph Salisbury & Harold Gaski	Sápmi
Francois Amar	Souvenir of Liège by Emmanuel Moses translated by Donna Stonecipher	France
Marjorie Arnett	from Saisons du corps by Claire Genoux translated by Ellen Hinsey	Switzerland
James Brasfield	Song 352 by Oleh Lysheha translated by James Brasfield	Ukraine
Kathleen Ellis	[and now the panopticon is a ruin] by Chus Pato translated by Erin Moure	Spain
Wayne Hobson	Dawn at Auschwitz by Senadin Musabegović translated by Ulvija Tanović	Bosnia
Josie Hughes	Letter from the Summer House by Oksana Zabuzhko translated by Douglas Burnet Smith	Ukraine
Steven Koltai	The Law is the Mediterranean by Cathrine Grøndahl translated by Roger Greenwald	Norway
Carl Little	What's Slouching by Zoran Ančevski translated by Graham W. Reid, Peggy Reid and the author	Macedonia
Carolyn Locke	[I will live and survive and be asked] Irina Ratushinskaya translated by David McDuff	Russia
Judith Carpenter	[I want to tell you what speaks to me most—] by Victar Shalkevich translated by Ilya Kaminsky and Kathryn Farris	Belarus

*from* **Trekways of the Wind** by Nils Aslak Valkeapää (1943 – 2001)

My home is my heart  
it migrates with me

The yoik is alive in my home  
the happiness of children sounds there  
herd-bells ring  
dogs bark  
the lasso hums  
In my home  
the fluttering edges of parkas  
the leggings of the Sami Girls  
warm smiles

My home is in my heart  
it migrates with me

-- -- --

You know it brother  
you understand sister  
but what do I say to strangers  
who spread out everywhere  
how shall I answer their questions  
that come from a different world

How can I explain  
that we cannot live in just one place  
and still live  
when we live  
on all tundra  
You are standing in my bed  
my privy is behind the bushes  
the sun is my lamp  
the lake is my washbowl

-- -- --

How can I explain  
that my heart is my home  
that it moves with me  
How can I explain  
that others live there too  
my brothers and sisters

-- -- --

What shall I say brother  
what shall I say sister

They come  
and ask where is your home  
they come with papers  
and say  
this belongs to nobody  
this is government land  
everything belongs to the State  
They bring out fat grimy books  
and say this is the law  
it applies to you too

What shall I say sister  
what shall I say brother

-- -- --

You know brother  
you understand sister

But when they ask where is your home  
do you answer them: all this  
On Skuolfedievvá we pitched our *lávnu*  
during the spring migration  
Čáppavuopmi is where we built our *goabti* during rut  
Our summer camp is at Ittunjarga  
and during the winter our reindeer are in Dálvadas

You know it sister  
you understand brother

-- -- --

Our ancestors kept fires on Allaorda  
on Stuorajeaggis' tufts  
on Viiddesčearru

Grandfather drowned in the fjord while fishing  
Grandmother cut her shoe grass in Šelgesrohtu  
Father was born in Finjubákti in burning cold

And still they ask  
where is your home

-- -- --

They come to me  
and show books  
Law books  
they have written themselves  
This is the law and It applies to you too  
See, here

But I do not see brother  
I do not see sister  
I see nothing  
I cannot  
I only show them the tundra

*translated from the Sami by Lars Nordström, Ralph Salisbury and Harold Gaski*

**Souvenir of Liège** by Emmanuel Moses (b. 1959)

What else remains besides time, bare, unchangeable, for us to belabor  
In unfinished discussions, interrupted by glances out of windows  
On these autumnal days, reflections of reflections...like the gray pond that has  
so often seen  
The little footbridge, and a lost fisherman leaning over the parapet, some acciden-  
tal birds,  
The haloes of the lamps behind the facades of the rue aux Juifs.  
The rain that was announced will be spared us today but not the trembling  
Of the leaves or the dirty light discharged into the city;  
The silences—they too are unraveled, each word taking on the significance  
Of a call of distress:  
How to keep ajar the door that gave on perspectives all azure,  
The majestic bay where the night collected itself?  
Lizards slid against the hot stone like so many drops  
Of eternity  
And all it took was a seagull to burst  
The inattention, the dull absence attached to the morning.  
Maybe dreams will know how to save us.  
Crowded platforms, trains departing, horse carriages gleaming like brand-new,  
Will we never disappear in the little square of a window  
For those who remain behind?  
A room will make our consciences echo with the here,  
With the now, with the shimmering point at the end of the breakwater  
That was the entire sea.

*translated from the French by Donna Stonecipher*

from **Saisons du corps** by Claire Genoux (b. 1971)

If I had loved better  
these days with their good smell of bark  
these copper twilights  
the mountains exposing their toothless jaws  
if I had walked more upright  
along trails that lead toward dawn  
where faith shelters us from doubts and time

If I had known how to savor the full laugh  
of the river that rocks in its fleece of leaves  
my head held to the trunk's pillow  
my cheek cast amidst thyme  
if I hadn't fled like a coward to the back streets  
and believed in the false lights of the city  
in its burning waltz of noise

perhaps I wouldn't—stumbling  
rake my wooden head against the walls of night

*translated from the French by Ellen Hinsey*

**Song 352** by Oleh Lysheha (b. 1949)

When you need to warm yourself,  
When you are hungry to share a word,  
When you crave a bread crumb,  
Don't go to the tall trees—  
You'll not be understood there, though  
Their architecture achieves cosmic perfection,  
transparent smoke winds from their chimneys.  
Don't go near those skyscrapers—  
From the one-thousandth floor  
They might toss snowy embers on your head.  
If you need warmth  
It's better to go to the snowbound garden.  
In the farthest corner you'll find  
The lonely hut of the horseradish.  
Yes, it's here, the poor hut of a horseradish.  
Is there a light on inside?—Yes, he's always at home.  
Knock at the door of a horseradish.  
Knock on the door of his hut.  
Knock, he will let you in.

*translated from the Ukrainian by James Brasfield*

[and now the panopticon is a ruin] by Chus Pato

and now the panopticon is a ruin

never mind for I can imagine the landscape however I want  
if a desert, it'll be a tell

if rich with vegetation, wisteria will grow over the building  
if in Antarctica, it'll be a phantasmagoria of ice

some folks (working women, crazies, schoolchildren, poets)  
still live there, they don't realize no one guards them

for in times of plenitude, systems of domination don't pay  
attention anymore to populations, they don't have to feed  
them

just as you were saying, "capital is illiterate"

i have to get out:

exit biology, remain in my body

*translated from the Galician by Erin Moure*

**Dawn at Auschwitz** by Senadin Musabegović (b. 1970)

This morning  
things have finally,  
through the shriek of the officer's whistle  
which penetrates the cracked barracks boards,  
whispered their names to us.

As I open my eyes  
two mice scurry into their hole;  
frightened by our pasted faces  
they twitch their legs and huddle together,  
in the warmth of their bodies  
on our smells to feed.

Images that slip by through the morning haze  
the gray dog's paws whose tracks in the snow  
resemble the dark eye sockets with their gaze turned up to the sky,  
in which white infinity freezes;  
and the electrified barbed wire which stirred by my movements  
touches the lines of the sky and the snow,  
in the sounds of the doomsday harp;  
and the officer's shining badge from which  
the eagle with spread-out wings  
plucks out pieces of my flesh  
enter me  
like darkness enters a child's eyes.

Here death has no spasm,  
no twitch.  
Everything is the same.  
The sunrise and the sunset are the same,

like the lines of the horizon  
streaked with rays on the snow  
in which I will be laid by my mother's hands that used to touch me  
in my dream.

Only order and firmness exist.

*translated from the Bosnian by Ulvija Tanović*

**Letter from the Summer House** by Oksana Zabuzhko

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ ,

The land's rusty again.

Acid rain: our blackened cucumber vines

Jut from the earth like scorched wire.

And I'm not sure about the orchard this year.

It needs a good cleaning up,

But I'm scared of those trees. When I walk

Among them, it feels like I'm going to step

On some carcass rotting in the tall grass,

Something crawling with worms, something smiling

Sickly in the hot sun.

And I get nervous over the sounds:

The day before yesterday, in the thicket, meowing,

The monotonous creaking of a tree,

The suppressed cackling of geese—all constantly

Straining for the same note. Do you remember

The dry elm, the one lightning turned

Into a giant charred bone last summer?

Sometimes I think it lords

Over the whole garden, infecting everything with rabid madness.

How do mad trees act?

Maybe they run amok like derailed streetcars. Anyway,

I keep an ax by the bed, just in case.

At least the butterflies are mating: we'll have

Caterpillars soon. Oh yes, the neighbor's daughter

Gave birth—a boy, a bit overdue. He had hair and teeth

Already, and could be a mutant,

Because yesterday, only nine days old, he shouted,

“Turn off the sky!” and hasn't said a word since.

Otherwise, he's a healthy baby.

So, there it is. If you can get away  
For the weekend, bring me something to read,  
Preferable in a language I don't know.  
The ones I call mine are exhausted.

*Kisses, love, O.*

*translated from the Ukrainian by Graham W. Reid, Peggy Reid, and the author*

**The Law Is the Mediterranean** by Cathrine Grøndahl (b. 1969)

The Law is the Mediterranean: Take long, slow strokes  
You're rowing across the strait in one day  
Jews, Christians, and Muslims  
live on each their shore  
You think the Law comes from the heavens  
and that the shiny surface of the sea mirrors God,  
an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth  
There is a sea between you  
The Law ties you together  
and keeps you apart,  
and every wave moves the Law: Take long, slow strokes  
You're rowing across the strait in one day.

*translated from the Norwegian by Roger Greenwald*

**What's Slouching** by Zoran Ančevski (b. 1954)

What's slouching like stagnant air  
through these Balkan corridors?  
Eroded erudites,  
plague-ridden radicals,  
communists, nationalists,  
bloodthirsty ecologists  
with milk teeth,  
descending from the national parks  
with conserved views,  
reserved for outbursts of tribal passion,  
Freudian complexes of minimal difference,  
for random reservists  
and condoms of all different colors too.

Whatever is slouching  
will never reach Bethlehem or Jerusalem  
nor Mecca or Medina  
but hurrying and scurrying  
down different European corridors  
in red crescent or red cross ambulances  
will enter a wilderness of mirrors,

in Versailles,  
where terrible tailors  
cut out new corridors  
and a well-tuned verse  
is reversed to a stammer.

*translated from the Macedonian by Graham W. Reid, Peggy Reid and the author*

**[I will live and survive and be asked]** by Irina Ratushinskaya (1954 - 2017)

I will live and survive and be asked:  
How they slammed my head against a trestle,  
How I had to freeze at nights,  
How my hair started to turn gray...  
But I'll smile. And I'll crack some joke  
And brush away the encroaching shadow.  
And I will render homage to the dry September  
That became my second birth.  
And I'll be asked: "doesn't it hurt you to remember?"  
Not being deceived by my outward flippancy.  
But the former names will detonate in my memory—  
Magnificent as an old cannon.  
And I will tell of the best people in all the earth.  
The most tender, but also the most invincible,  
How they said farewell, how they went to be tortured.  
How they waited for letters from their loved ones.  
And I'll be asked: what helped us to live  
When there were neither letters nor any news—only walls,  
And the cold of the cell, and the blather of official lies,  
And the sickening promises made in exchange for betrayal.  
And I will tell of the first beauty  
I saw in captivity.  
A frost-covered window! No peepholes, nor walls,  
Nor cell bars, nor the long-endured pain—  
Only a blue radiance on a tiny pane of glass,  
A lacy winding pattern—none more beautiful could be dreamt!  
The more clearly you looked, the more powerfully blossomed  
Those brigand forests, campfires and birds!  
And how many times there was bitter cold weather  
And how many windows sparkled after that one—

But never was it repeated,  
That upheaval of rainbow ice!  
And anyway, what good would it be to me now,  
And what would be the pretext for that festival?  
Such a gift can only be received once,  
And once is probably enough.

*translated from the Russian by David McDuff*

**[I want to tell you what speaks to me most—]** by Vıctar Shalkevıch

I want to tell you what speaks to me most—

My little neighbor, the son of village drunkards,  
a bright young boy,  
by the gas-lamp—for we have no electricity—he  
writes each evening a verse about freedom.  
He is no Raznai and no Baradulin and certainly he is  
no Dudarai,  
but I tell you, we will hear of him one day!

With these optimistic words I want to end  
the difficult evening  
in our immeasurable Belarus.

*translated from the Belarusian by Ilya Kaminsky and Kathryn Farris*

## Brief Bios

**Zoran Ančevski** (b. 1954) is a professor in the Department of English Language and Literature at Sts. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje. He is the former secretary of the Macedonian PEN Center, president of the Struga Poetry Evenings, and author of five books of poetry, including a *Selected Poems*, published by the Macedonian press Blesok.

**Claire Genoux** (b. 1971) was born in Lausanne, where she also studied at the University Lausanne. In 1997, her first collection of poems, *Oval Sun*, was published, and in 1999 she received the Prix Ramuz for *Seasons of the Body*. A collection of her short stories was published in 2000.

**Cathrine Grøndahl** (b. 1960), from Norway, published her first book of poems in 1994; it won the Tarjei Vesaas First Book Prize. She has since published three more volumes of poems. She has studied philosophy and law and works as a defense attorney in Oslo.

**Oleh Lysheha** (1949 - 2014), born in Tysmenytsia, Ukraine, published his first book in 1977 in samizdat. His first officially published collection appeared in 1989. James Brasfield collaborated with Lysheha on a selection of his poems translated into English, which was published by Harvard University Press and won the 2000 PEN Award for Poetry in Translation.

**Emmanuel Moses** (b. 1959) was born in Casablanca, lived in Israel from 1968 to 1986, and then returned to Paris, where he has lived ever since. He is the author of six books of poetry and five works of fiction. His literary award include the Prix Max Jacob. He is also a translator from Hebrew, German, and English. Other Press has published a collection of his poems in English translation, *Last News of Mr. Nobody*.

**Senadin Musabegović** (b. 1970) born in Sarajevo, is a poet and political theorist. He has published three collections of poetry, and his books appear in Italian and French editions.

**Chus Pato** (Maria Xesus Pato Diaz (b. 1955) was born in Ourense, Galicia, in the northwest corner of Spain. She teaches history and geography at a high school in Galicia and has published seven books of poetry, including *m-Tald* and *Charenton*, as well as a selection translated into Spanish by Iris Coshon: *A Ganges of Words*. A selection from *m-Tald* was published in Canada by Nomados in 2003. Chus Pato is a member of the Galician Popular Front, which favors independence for Galicia.

**Irina Ratushnskaya** (1954 - 2017), born in Odessa, was imprisoned in Russia for her dissident activities and exiled from the country in 1986. She is the author of numerous collections of poetry and two memoirs.

**Victar Shalkevich** (b. 1959) was born in Grodno. In 1980, he graduated from Belarus State Institute of Theater and worked in the Grodno Drama Theater for many years. In addition to being a poet and theater actor, he also plays lead roles in films and is known as a singer whose albums have gained him awards and popular recognition in Belarus and Poland.

**Nils Aslak Valkeapää** (1943 – 2001), from Sapmi, was a prolific musician, artist, and poet who served as a cultural ambassador of the Sami People. Three of his books have appeared in English. *Greetings from Lappland: The Sami, Europe's forgotten people*, translated by Beverley Wahl; *Trekways of the Wind*, illustrated by the author and translated by Ralph Salisbury, Lars Nordstrom, and Harald Gaski; and *The Sun, My Father*, translated by Ralph Salisbury, Lars Nordstrom, and Harald Gaski.

**Oksana Zabuzhko** (b. 1960), born in Kyiv, holds a PhD in the philosophy of arts and works as an associate scholar for the Institute of Philosophy of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences. She is Distinguished Professor of Creative Writing at Kyiv Chevchenko University. In 1994, she was a Fulbright fellow to the U.S. Today, she is the most famous writer in Ukraine, thanks to her autobiographical novel, *Field Research in Ukrainian Sex*. She is also the author of several widely translated collections poetry.