

"A Quarterly
Published Strictly
Quarterly"

Works & Days

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our readers
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Winter 2012

Nº I

Apology Not Accepted

by Cara Marsh Sheffler

In our highly confessional culture, I confess this:

You know nothing about me and—what's more—I hope to keep it that way.

Obviously, I should shut up now. That would be the ideal course of action to yield my desired outcome.

But, I'm no better than my vices and no one ever has accused me of restraint. {Cont'd}

Lion Tamer

by Willow Jane Sainsbury



A Beautiful Evening to Enjoy the Charms of Being Alive

by Jennifer Kraus and Henry Smith

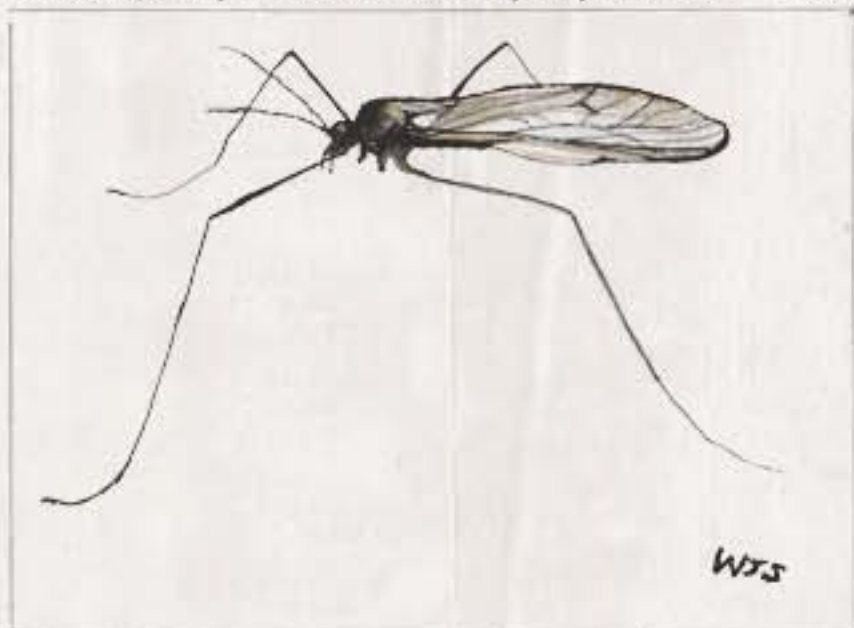


The Weirdest Thing

by Gillian Louise Bostock



"At dawn get to your fields, and one day they'll be full." - Hesiod



Drive

by Gillian Louise Bostock



Work, Transcendent

by Luke Cissell

Before it becomes uncomfortably apparent, let me go ahead and admit it: I have undertaken to write myself out of the trap I have fallen into again. It's a familiar trap, and though I trade in the arts (I make music), I would imagine it's recognizable to anyone who has worked at anything for any length of time. I have begun to question the value of my work in rather non-specific (but oh so specific!), sweeping, metaphysical terms. {Cont'd}

Trapeze Artist

by Willow Jane Sainsbury



Recipes

by Eric Wines and
Ashley Suzan

Tuxedo Sam

by Rebecca Bersohn



Building One:

*Capital, Fire, and General
Focus in the Late-Modern
Nation State*

by Eric Bland

Building Two:

*Gross Mismanagement
of Simple Truth in
Construction and Thought*

by Eric Bland

Buff Whalin'

by Rebecca Bersohn



Lonesome Dreamer

by Luke Cissell

Our Trespasses

Part One of Three

by Cara Marsh Sheffler

The panic attacks came on the night his mother's twin sister died, a woman Gabe had hardly seen in ten years. That lapse was no one's fault—or so Gabe was wont to think. The disease took a decade to kill her and in that time, as she shuttled from clinic to clinic, Gabe had dropped out of school and made a life for himself out East. Her funeral was held up by the Flood—an 80-year-flood, if you listened to the news, but nothing much worse than '93 if you listened to the locals—so that it had now been just over a week since his aunt had passed away. But the panic attacks, he somehow knew, were to remain a nightly fixture. {Cont'd}

Work Transcendent

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by Luke Cissell
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Work, Transcendent
Luke Cissell

"How long shall we sit in our porticoes practising idle and musty virtues, which any work would make impertinent?"

-Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*

Before it becomes uncomfortably apparent, let me go ahead and admit it: I have undertaken to write myself out of the trap I have fallen into again. It's a familiar trap, and though I trade in the arts (I make music), I would imagine it's recognizable to anyone who has worked at anything for any length of time. I have begun to question the value of my work in rather non-specific (but oh so specific!), sweeping, metaphysical terms. In short, I am presently taking myself and my profession much too seriously.

Work and work alone will save me—I need no more faith than a faith in this principle. Whatever else, I must keep working. It's the only way the knots can work themselves out. *O laborum dulce lenimen*—the sweet solace of labor.² I feel that I know this instinctively, but experience has surely also played its part in teaching me this simple truth. I know my current place to be a point within a cycle by virtue of my having made its circuit many times over. And yet it is true that something inside me fundamentally and intuitively *knows* and has always known that work will save me. Thoreau, Hesiod long before him, and many more since have extolled the virtues of work. Their thesis is as old as our species because it speaks to something primal, a basic human urge to "plow the good earth"—something that modernity would have us deem irrelevant but is never truly forgotten, only suppressed, so that when it is described to us our spirits nod in knowing agreement.³ So perhaps it is that experience has taught me to trust my instincts.

What then of these forces that rise undead to shake my resolve, driving me to seek new forms of edification? Surely they flow from a common source, but they are ever shapeshifting, virulently evolving as I evolve and adapting themselves to locate and attack my most vulnerable weaknesses. How else can it be that I am cognitively aware of the cycle I have described, and yet troubled anew with very real worries and doubts each time I come to this point? The ancients personified these feelings of restlessness:

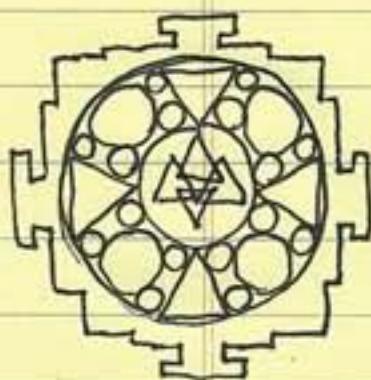
"Strife is no only child. Upon the earth
Two Strifes exist; the one is praised by those
Who come to know her, and the other blamed.
Their natures differ: for the cruel one
Makes battles thrive, and war; she wins no love
But men are forced, by the immortals' will,
To pay the grievous goddess due respect.
The other, first-born child of blackest Night,
Was set by Zeus, who lives in air, on high,
Set in the roots of earth, an aid to men.
She urges even lazy men to work:
A man grows eager, seeing another rich
From ploughing, planting, ordering his house;
So neighbour vies with neighbour in the rush
For wealth: this Strife is good for mortal men –
Potter hates potter, carpenters compete,
And beggar strives with beggar, bard with bard."⁴

-Hesiod (*Works and Days* 11-26)

Here the idealist in me takes exception and feels obliged to hold forth on how artists are exempt from this sort of Strife—but no. Whoever or whatever we fancy ourselves to be, each of us lives in a world of people and ideas from which we cannot exempt ourselves no matter how we might try. Hesiod was onto something in his description

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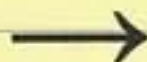
of Strife as a sort of built-in motor; today we hear it called "drive." We might see this in stark contrast to Horace's sweet solace: how can work be both a struggling trial among peers and a soothing, transcendently peaceful experience?



The answer is that the two ideas are in fact symbiotic—different points along the cycle, the one growing out of and into the other. We strive, seeking solace, and upon finding it we realize that our contentment cannot last forever; restlessness looms and strife is born anew. This mechanism keeps us sharp and keeps us working. Yet, we must not submit to any notion of our fate as dictated by the conventions of our profession; neither shall we run and seek refuge in any mirage of an ivory tower when the dark doubts come calling. Strife must not frighten: it must inspire. If we get stuck on this point, we are worse than nothing.

Let that good Strife carry us into battle with our own doubts, and let that honest combat try us such that we shall emerge not exhausted but emboldened, knowing that work is not a faceless oppressor but an ally and a whetstone.

Whence, then, these doubts of late with which I must wrestle? Chief among them is a concern that almost all serious conversation about music has confined itself to the "progress" narrative. A typical way of deeming a piece of music worthless is to say it doesn't do anything to move the Discussion along. What discussion? And whose? To dare to ask such questions is to challenge the prevailing notion that all of history and humankind are on a path like this:



Who can look honestly at our past, recent or otherwise, and say as much? Even the sunniest of optimists must be forced to add a few kinks to that diagram. Our age is supposed to have accepted non-linearity as a fact of existence, and yet our rhetoric belies this assumption. Merely count the number of "watershed" moments we have seen in the last decade (or in the last week, depending on your news source). Every other day, it would seem, brings a watershed (or worse, "game-changer") that takes humanity one irrevocable step closer to whatever it is towards which we are supposed to be progressing. And while markets may fail, we never do; conveniently, everything we do or might do as a species conspires to bring us towards infinite enlightenment.



The impossibility of failure is one of the clearest symptoms of the progress narrative. By all accounts, indeed it would seem that no-one fails today. Contemporary culture, by and large subject to the delusion that where there is no risk there can be no failure, is bought and paid for before the fact and there are no real visceral stakes—just financial ones, where even a loss is a tax write-off. Nothing ventured, nothing lost; and, most assuredly, nothing learned. Most of what we consume as culture is sanitized, pre-packaged, given a predictable set of reviews by critics with predictable prejudices, and then shoved at the appropriate demographic, after which point the worst that can happen is a bad day at the box office.



Work Transcendent

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by Luke Cissell
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Risks have become a thing only to be taken with other people's assets: the individual, he is told, need no longer take on any real, personal risk. In a country where private fortunes are believed to be divinely pregnant (if grotesquely post-term) with jobs that will solve the unemployment crisis, we are ever willing to believe in the fantasies preached by others while we neglect the fantasy of real possibility that lies in each of us. When we worship such barren wombs of conventional wisdom while abandoning the eternally fertile faculties within ourselves, we get the kind of culture we deserve.

**Work. Disengage in the round-the-clock discussion
where there is nothing at any rate to discuss.
Engage in that fantasy where there lies real truth.**

This irony is not lost on me that it should be this fiction of progress distracting me from getting anything done. If only we might eliminate it and its symptoms altogether.

But if history is any guide, history will not bear us out. The progress thread is so thoroughly ingrained in most historical narratives, such that we seem capable of retrospectively ascribing to individuals only one of two possible relationships with his fictional fate. One is either:

1. a product of one's times
(a mere pawn of and footnote to the vast sweep of bold-lettered history)
- or,
2. a heavyweight of titanic proportions
(a veritable demigod with the power to create and destroy futures.)

The false note rang by both the event-centered and the Carlylean "Great Man" versions of history is that old one of inevitability: the running subtext that *it had to be so*. (Certainly, it didn't have to be so and, to be sure, there are plenty of revisionists out there who will tell you that it *wasn't* so, but few are interested in such pesky nuance and evolving complexity of narrative.) This brand of unsubtle characterization, marked by laziness and a lack of humility before the inscrutable, is unfortunately also ubiquitous, as the search for truth has yielded time and again to a human desire for definitiveness, fact and method be damned.

This need for definitiveness brought on by *en masse* subscription to the progress narrative has brought with it an hysterical obsession for categorization and cataloguing well beyond the point of absurdity. Artists and their music must be compartmentalized, assigned to genre, and bestowed with ranking so as not to disrupt the grand narrative. This, by the way, assumes a piece of music is even worthy of critical evaluation in the first place, and not merely "entertainment." Rock and roll and other popular forms were there to take up the mantle when "serious" music decided entertainment was a goal not worth pursuing. And "serious" music has struggled (rather hopelessly) to get that mantle back, slow as it has been to realize that rock, folk, and the myriad popular forms that exist today are capable, too, of aspiring to the "serious." It is

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symptomatic of this conservative mindset that only jazz has yet attained the widespread sanction of Academia (always last to the party).

Why so slow to dawn, this realization, amidst the now so many stagnating, segregated genres that might be imbued with a new vibrancy or that might lead to

unexpected frontiers?

Because such admissions demand the utter reevaluation of our past, flying directly in the face as they do of our preconceptions. And I won't bank on an awakening anytime in the near future. Traditional histories fade slowly, slowly, slowly, over generations, and are kept on the shelf farcically past their expiration date by an army of hacks and pseudo-professional busybodies. This type, whose stake in theory and criticism is inversely proportionate in magnitude to that of his investment in self-knowledge, lives in a fantasy world of coloring contests and talent shows of which he fancies himself judge, never grasping that these are adjudicated for him *a priori* by chance, group dynamics, personal bias, and "the market" (I use quotes to highlight the fiction of free access).

Anthony Tommasini for *The New York Times* recently did his part to ensure the dialogue remains as dumbed down as is conceivable with his multi-installment "Top 10 Composers" column.

"In my exercise of sorting through the great composers of history to determine the Top 10, I have been putting off dealing with the 19th-century Romantic era (except for those giants of opera, Verdi and Wagner, who have already made the cut). But there is a reason. Music lovers have long been understandably enthralled with Chopin, Schumann, Mendelssohn, Berlioz, Liszt, Tchaikovsky, Brahms and their Romantic brethren. For better or worse, their works still dominate the standard repertory. Yet their music is so personal and idiosyncratic that it is hard to assess it in terms of greatness."

Here we have the crux of the madness. Greatness is quantifiable, Mr. Tommasini implies, but only if we can see through those "personal" and "idiosyncratic" qualities that make music, well, human. How handy that Bach, Beethoven, and Mozart (who earned the top three rankings, respectively, from Mr. Tommasini) composed with musical idioms pristine enough and unclouded with the later licenses of high Romanticism so as to be easily analyzed, catalogued and assessed in terms of greatness. (Schubert, in his more elusive weirdness, came in fourth, poor fellow.) I'm only thankful that none of these men is around to see how his life's work—deeply personal and endlessly idiosyncratic, it must here be said—has been adulterated by this brand of musicology.

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I never received a response from Mr. Tommasini to the following comment I posted to his column's discussion group:

There is a breathless lack of anything new or interesting here—just more parroting of the same old facile narratives and ur-histories/mythologies about all the usual suspects since Bach. Really, NYTimes? Couldn't we let this fetish for top ten lists die out with the millennium? As for greatness, the whole notion of it is no doubt obscured, distorted, and cheapened by continuing to subscribe to this sort of pat linear history presented here where A begat B who begat C and so on. If we're willing to admit that we can't possibly have adequate "perspective" to assess the "place in the pantheon" of contemporary composers, can we please, at long long last, take one more step and admit that this whole calcified history of greatness and influence is at best, extremely tired, and undeniably flawed and misleading? Or shall we forever be reduced to discussing culture in terms of the kind of lists and critiques we might have wisely left off tacking up onto poster board (or if you were really trying to please, those heavy-duty tri-fold presentation boards) in the 5th grade?

Admittedly the ranting of a cranky commenter in a make-believe forum on a make-believe topic, it nonetheless underscores a question I wish to answer: How, with our sources and means of interpretation as varied as they are, can we relate to what has come before? Can we be bold enough to do our own research and draw our own conclusions as they might pertain to each of us (and, I would suggest, as even the Great Men with their lightning bolts and epiphanies did in their days on earth)? Must we even care?

Distracting ourselves once more from our work, we illogically seek inspiration in our heroes' lives and deaths rather than in their creative output. And even then, like dallying children, we prefer lore over fact. Lately a perverted many would prefer to revel in insincere speculation about a curse that killed

Johnson
Jones
Hendrix
Joplin
Morrison
Cobain
Winehouse

& others in their 27th year, rather than ponder the messy (and, by now, boring) circumstances of an individual drug-overdose or suicide.⁷

We enshrine the fallen for all the wrong reasons, while their work, deservedly or not, has barely any chance of ever escaping the bloated gravity of the prevailing narrative. A composer once confessed to me that he found strength in the hardships of the titans of yore—the deafness of Beethoven, the poverty of Mozart, and so on. The lives of the martyrs made it possible for him to carry on in good faith or at least faint hope that, miserable though his life may be at present, history might yet judge it not a waste. I think my reading of history is more optimistic than that (if slightly less self-aggrandizing).



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I am convinced that these GIANTS OF HISTORY shrouded in myth and tradition as they are, got real pleasure out of working. I welcome charges of hedonism in this being the lesson I take away—for I know that the more work and the better work that *I feel that I do*, the happier I will be.

Consider others, but work on yourself and of yourself and for yourself—else the rest be vanity. Honest work will find an honest audience.

If we can admit the limitlessness of choice that a faith in our own humanity affords us, then we can begin to move beyond the false sense we get from these histories that depict humankind on an inexorable course from primitiveness to greatness. We can begin to move beyond the various forms of what musicologist Richard Taruskin calls “utopian thinking” (a thing he has railed against unflinchingly for years with a laser’s focus and an unmatched eloquence).⁸ Utopian thinkers, having given up the search for accord within, seek their prize in the external world and in all-encompassing theoretical constructs. Speaking back in 1989 at the Chicago Seminars on the Future, Taruskin observed:

“The music biz stands ready as ever to co-opt anyone’s success, and the academy stands ready as ever to turn today’s counterculture into tomorrow’s orthodoxy. Both projects, in fact, are well along. Let me merely note the quickness with which all this mind-boggling diversity has been subsumed under a typically mind-numbing academic shibboleth. Ladies and gentlemen, I give you “postmodernism.” And you can have it. And perhaps you’ll tell me what it means.”⁹

For the time being, it seems as if “all this mind-boggling diversity” has collapsed into a culture of bandwagons, each one rolling by ever gaudier and more bloated with hangers-on desperate for approbation and hungry to be a part of the next big thing, whatever (utterly) that may be. Partly to blame, as we have noted and as Taruskin here suggests, is the language we use and misuse in our obsessive need to categorize something the instant it appears. Time and again we are left with a lexicon that does more to obfuscate than to enlighten; with a quaint many categories and little understanding.

The way forward must come from within—everything else is false. If each can bravely claim his faculties as his own, then he can cast aside the illusional ethos of his era and can aggressively seize his own, real, meaningful ethos out of the clutches of a faceless socio-economy fueled by groupthink, complacency, and greed born out of brain-dead boredom.

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But how, if we orient ourselves inwardly thus, will we maintain any sense of community or shared value? How also will we avoid the fate of Pliny's ostrich, who naïvely buried its head in the brushes along with all its cares?¹⁰ Neil Young once lamented:

"I need a crowd of people,
but I can't face 'em day to day."¹¹

I've asked myself why it is that I, too, crave community but often recoil from those that offer themselves.



I think it's due in part to my (Groucho) Marxist tendency to spurn any club that would have me as member, in part out of an unfailing and inexplicable terror of sacrificing my autonomy, and in part out of my love for a motley handful of loners scattered around the globe that are the closest thing to a community for people like me. But this is the real community, the only community—the one that reveals itself to us when we are being honest with ourselves and true to our work.

As tempting as it can be to piggyback onto the latest *-ism*, our times demand a more rounded inquiry and not merely a breadth of experience but also a depth of inner experience, which is to say a rigorousness of thought that is brazenly curious, endlessly dynamic, defiantly alive. Each must chart his own course from beginning to end, and not delude himself that the refusal to make a choice is not, *ipso facto*, a choice. Those choices necessarily include how we interact with each other and with the world around us—and interact we must. But as much as I am capable of seeing in others something that is familiar, I can not rely on a neighbor or a society to show me my life's path and expect to be satisfied. I see signs and I learn from without, but I respond from within and I must apprehend and nurture those responses else give up my power to think altogether.



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How often need I remind myself that work takes on its own logic, making all other concerns addressed here "impertinent," as Thoreau reminds us? I ask myself only because here I have arrived at the same conclusion as I always do when I go through this mental process. Is there a value in hashing all this out longhand for the umpteenth time? I think that there must be, because I feel strengthened each time, having found the courage to go on working in spite of my doubts, which is all any of us can—must—do.

Work! Don't wait for someone to tell you you're ready: you are. When we can no longer afford to test, we must launch. When we can no longer afford to dine out, we must cook. When we can no longer afford to watch, we must create a spectacle. When we can no longer afford to criticize, we must create. When we can no longer afford to hide in the cloisters, we must preach in the streets. "Pile work on work, and still more work." Winter is cruel, but work's solace and bounty are perennial. §

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- 1 Henry David Thoreau, *Walden, or Life in the Woods* (Norwalk: Easton Press, 1981), 333; "Conclusion."
- 2 Horace, *Odes* I:32, 14-15. From an ode to his lyre.
- 3 Hesiod, *Works and Days* 479. Translated by Apostolos N. Athanassakis (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), p. 77.
- 4 Hesiod, *Works and Days* 11-26. Translated by Dorothea Wender (London: Penguin Books, 1973), p. 59.
- 5 Anthony Tommasini, "The Top 10 Composers: The Romantics." *The New York Times: ArtsBeat*, January 19, 2011.
- 6 Luke Cissell, comment posted in response to Anthony Tommasini, "The Top 10 Composers: A Few Last Thoughts." *The New York Times: ArtsBeat*, January 24, 2011.
- 7 Glen Levy, "Amy Winehouse Becomes the Newest Member of the Forever 27 Club." *Time NewsFeed*, August 23, 2011.
- 8 Richard Taruskin, *The Danger of Music and Other Anti-Utopian Essays* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), p. xi.
- 9 Richard Taruskin, "Et in Arcadia Ego; or, I Didn't Know I Was Such a Pessimist until I Wrote This Thing (a talk)," in *The Danger of Music and Other Anti-Utopian Essays* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), p. 13.
- 10 Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* X:1. "They are the greatest of all other foules ... But the veriest fooles they be ... For as high as the rest of their bodie is, yet if they thrust their head and necke once into any shrub or bush, and get it hidden, they thinke then they are safe ynough, and that no man seeth them." Translation by Philemon Holland (1601).
- 11 Neil Young, "On the Beach." *On the Beach*. (Reprise, 1974).
- 12 Hesiod, *Works and Days* 382.

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Editorial Staff

Luke Cissell (*Work, Transcendent; Lonesome Dreamer*) is a musician and composer who lives in Lower Manhattan. Born in Louisville, Kentucky, he was a fiddling champion at the age of eight and went on to train as a classical violinist. Cissell's recent work includes a collection of chamber music, a full-length album, and a suite for solo violin written as a companion piece to Cara Marsh Sheffler's *Guide*. He is currently at work on his second studio album and an opera based on Henry James's *The Ambassadors*. Play with his jukebox at <http://www.lukecissell.com>.

Sarah Marriage (*Art Director; Designer; Programmer; Calligrapher*) is a woodworking student at the College of the Redwoods Fine Woodworking program in Fort Bragg, California. Conceived in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, born in Tulsa, Oklahoma, raised in Anchorage, Alaska, Sarah has at turns worked in the fields of architecture, structural engineering, occupational health and safety, dog-walking, data management, physics, youth empowerment, and construction supply. Recent projects include a madrone box and the rehabilitation of a nineteenth-century townhouse in Baltimore, Maryland. The box will be on display alongside the work of her classmates at Fort Bragg's Town Hall from January 28th to February 5th.

Cara Marsh Sheffler (*Our Trespasses; Apology Not Accepted*) is a writer who lives on Manhattan's Lower East Side. In her past life as an actress, she was featured in Woody Allen's *Celebrity* and in The Looking Glass Theatre's Off-Broadway production of *Much Ado About Nothing*. A recipient of the Eagles Prize, she has most recently been working on an essay collection and a novel about the guidebook used by the Donner Party, *Guide*. She performed an excerpt of *Guide* in tandem with Luke Cissell's (*The Myth of*) *Infinite Progress* at the Brick Theater this past spring. Sheffler is also providing the libretto for Cissell's operatic adaptation of Henry James's *The Ambassadors*. She is not on Facebook.

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Contributors

Born in Los Angeles, **Rebecca Bersohn** (*Tuxedo Sam; Buff Whalin*) is a New York based artist. She received her BFA at New York University. Her work has been exhibited at Monster Island, Charlie Horse Gallery, the Market Hotel in Brooklyn, BWAC and The Commons Gallery at NYU. Her Awards in the Arts include Bank of America Art Award 2004, an Artist's Distinction Award (2003) for an ink/water color piece at the California Art Education Association Los Angeles County Exhibit and the Governor's Art Scholar Award 2002-2003.

Eric Bland (*Building One; Building Two*) is a writer/director/performer/accountant and the artistic director of the Old Kent Road Theater. He was born and raised in Richmond, Virginia and has a degree in Creative Writing (Poetry) from Princeton University and an MA in Writing for Performance from Goldsmiths College, University of London. His play *Death at Film Forum* was published in NYTE's Plays and Playwrights 2009. Recent productions: *Here at Home* (31Down); *Emancipatory Politics: A Romantic Tragedy* (Incubator Arts Project); *Jeannine's Abortion: A Play in One Trimester* (The Brick, w/ Piper McKenzie Productions); *Are We Bourgeois, Mon Amour?* (A Psycho's Analysis) (Bushwick Starr); *I Stand for Nothing* (Ontological-Hysteric Theater). He was named one of nytheatre.com's people of the year for 2010, and his next show, *All the Indifferent Children of the Earth*, will premiere at The Brick Theater in mid-February, 2012. He may be contacted at ericbland@gmail.com.

Originally from the San Francisco Bay Area, **Gillian Louise Bostock** (*Drive; The Weirdest Thing*) left New York this past spring to return to the West Coast and focus solely on her own work after years of putting aside her own artistic goals to become a real-live sponge of photographic extrapolapagus. Predominantly photographing interiors and landscapes, she employs the medium as a means to dabble with philosophical questions concerning the meaning of life and lock its fleeting beauty into place much like a butterfly pinned beneath museum glass. More of her work can be found here (www.gillianbostock.com) and on Cowbird (<http://cowbird.com/author/gillian/>).

Jennifer Kraus (*A Beautiful Evening to Enjoy the Charms of Being Alive*), based in Warwick and Brooklyn, NY is the founder of HUGE CUP Productions, a fledgling live arts production company. Since its inception in 2010 she has produced two original hybrid theater works in Warwick. Jennifer has worked in choreographic and assistant direction roles at The Cell, The Players Theatre, and HERE in NYC. She teaches dance, drama, and voice at the New York Performing Arts Center in Washingtonville, NY. Learn more at hugecupwordpress.com.

Christo Logan (*Now Playing*) has worked in New York, San Francisco and Shenzhen on projects inventing furniture and products, graphics and websites, buildings and fabrication, installations and urban planning, and remote control fighting robots. He is currently a founding member of Urbanus Labs architecture office in Hong Kong, and he plays the cello.

Willow Jane Sainsbury (*Trapeze Artist; Lion Tamer; Insect Illustrations*) is an artist and illustrator, who currently lives in Vicenza, Italy. She has lived in Melbourne, Australia; Auckland, New Zealand; and Oxford, United Kingdom in the past three years where she continues to teach, learn and work as an artist. She most recently returned to education, learning print-making at the Australian Print Workshop. She is currently working on her own illustration project and a study of landscapes. She is not on Facebook.

Henry Smith (*A Beautiful Evening to Enjoy the Charms of Being Alive*), hailing from Warwick, NY, is an aspiring creative videographer. Just this past summer he began creating short videos for a website, grinds.com, that focuses on showcasing various artists in the local Warwick community. His dream is to keep creating videos to enrich the community around him, while broadening his own artistic expression. He had a wonderful time teaming up with Jennifer Kraus to create a surreal, dream-like piece that he hopes everyone who watches will enjoy. Thanks to Vastu Yoga for letting us use their beautiful space.

California-grown and a New Yorker at heart, **Ashley Suzan** (*Recipes*) is a graduate of the Gallatin School at New York University. The youngest of four, Ashley was raised in the kitchen. An avid yogi and spinning enthusiast, her creative passions include drawing, food, and beverage. Follow her on Twitter @AshleySuzan.

Eric Wines (*Recipes*) enjoys trolling flea markets for treasures, playing with plants, and distance running. Eric is co-owner of Tre restaurant in Manhattan and a member of Skylight NYC. He hosts candlelight suppers and classy cocktail parties. Eric was raised in Detroit, MI and lives in New York City. Follow him on Twitter @EricWines.