
THE EXHIBITIONIST

XZBT12 | JULY 2013

THEXZBT.WORDPRESS.COM



THINK. ACT. XZBT.

THE EXHIBITIONIST is a monthly online magazine dedicated to the cause of creativity.

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COVER PHOTO *Coldstone* Khadija Ejaz

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FROM THE EDITOR

Where were you a year ago? What has changed? Where will you be a year from now? Will you be happy, will you believe in something new? Will you be alive?



A year ago in July I created the XZBT Facebook page and website from my parents house in Muscat, Oman. I was the lowest I'd ever been and very angry with the world, so I decided to start an online magazine and focus all of my restless energy into that. I thought I'd run the magazine for a year and then re-evaluate my position from there.

The year is up. My life has completely changed. I am married and have moved back to the US where I had spent a decade after high school. I had honestly never thought that I would return to this country. I am happy, maybe for the first time in my adult life. Right now, I am writing the editorial for the twelfth issue of The Exhibitionist. The twelfth issue. That means I have successfully turned out twelve complete issues over the past year, even while I was travelling and in the process of getting married. It was not always easy, and sometimes it was difficult. Maintaining the standard of excellence that The Exhibitionist stands for was very difficult. But I did it. Whatever I was doing worked.

Where will I be on July 1, 2014? What will I be doing? Celebrating the second year of The Exhibitionist. I have re-evaluated my position and have decided that we will not be shutting down. We will be relaunching in August this year with a brand new website. We will increase our readership, and we will look for sponsors who will be able to help us pay our contributors. Our first new issue will be coming out a couple of months later in October.

So thank you for your contributions and your support, dear friends. We have grown together over the last 365 days. See you soon in August and October. And next year in July.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Khadija', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Khadija Ejaz

GUEST EDITORIAL

I grew up in a web of words and pictures that made my childhood, a product of an English Literature professor and an Art History professor. Our house backed onto woods with a creek, and our walls seemed comprised of art and books that held up the ceilings. My favorite playground was the woods. I hand-fed raccoons and baby birds and floated dolls in the pond. I felt intensely connected with nature, but I was also able to see that human beings could create beauty with art and words and that words could form art. Living two years in Europe bridged the gap for me between the beauty of nature and the beauty of art.



Time blurs. And now I hold my little boy in my arms and read to him in the twilight. Am I reading or is it my mother reading to me in Machiavelli's villa on a cool Tuscan night? I tell him to close his eyes so he can see the pictures in his head. To teach our children to love learning is one of the greatest gifts we can give them. To teach them to see those pictures in their heads, to imagine and then to create is to teach them how to become artistic in their own right. My artist husband and I created Purple Toad Publishing because we want children to love learning. We want them to be excited by the ideas presented and to have our books be simply beautiful. We feel our excitement and love of books can be as contagious as an echo. My son's first grade teacher told me that he "approached each new book with the same excitement as he would a new adventure." I want all

kids to feel that way and to remember some day that a house is not made of wood and stone, but of books and pictures and ideas and love.

Cynthia Cope was born in Chicago, Illinois, in the US and has lived all over America and in Europe. She now lives in the US in Pennsylvania with her artist husband and son. Cynthia started Purple Toad Publishing in 2012 and had worked in education, with animals, and as a registered nurse before that. Purple Toad publishes narrative non-fiction books for children. For more information about Cynthia and Purple Toad, visit <http://www.PurpleToadPublishing.com>

XZBTs

Monsoon then, and nowadays

Samir Patel

Chhuppak chhuppak chhup chhup chhuppak!
 Then, a little boy splashes with his boyhood
 Friend in little muddy puddles that drain
 Into big muddy puddles through muddy
 Streams that carry colorful dreamboats that swirl
 Over miniature eddies before they drown under the wetness
 Of monsoon rain. They will refloat unmuddied in his dreams again...

Brush brush thupd thupd brush brush!
 Muddy shoes that shoe wrinkled muddy
 Toes, evenly shapely, big toe the biggest,
 Tiny one the tiniest- muddy yet dainty- they wriggle as
 Dripping cuffs of his muddy pants fall and disappear under
 The muddy seat of his pants and drenched drawers, his muddy
 Shirt as if bereft of its pair falls on the floor too, two
 Leaps away. The boy streaks towards his bedroom, "Yippee..."

Tit tat titatatit tit tatatat tit tit!
 The boy peers outside the window of his bedroom
 Little muddy puddles have grown, dreamboats obscured.
 Oily hair glued to his bespattered forehead, fingered into funny
 Patterns; he giggles. Clear water from the tumbler collecting

Mud, splashing over and between his dainty shapely toes in
Brief flash-floods, each flood less muddy. His forehead is now
Unspattered, his skin is glowing, with unmuddied joy
In his heart. An unmuddied hunger wriggles in his stomach...

Nowadays the unmuddied joy of a muddy monsoon-splash taunts
this boy-man; unmuddied longings cower in his heart now muddied.
Unwashable black mud as if will spatter when they try to wriggle
within. How come?

Samir Patel was born and raised in Bhuj, Gujarat, in India, and currently lives in Philadelphia, USA. He is training to be a geriatric psychiatrist and enjoys music, good food, heavy rain, running, and poetry.



Alone in Austin*Robert Ferrier*

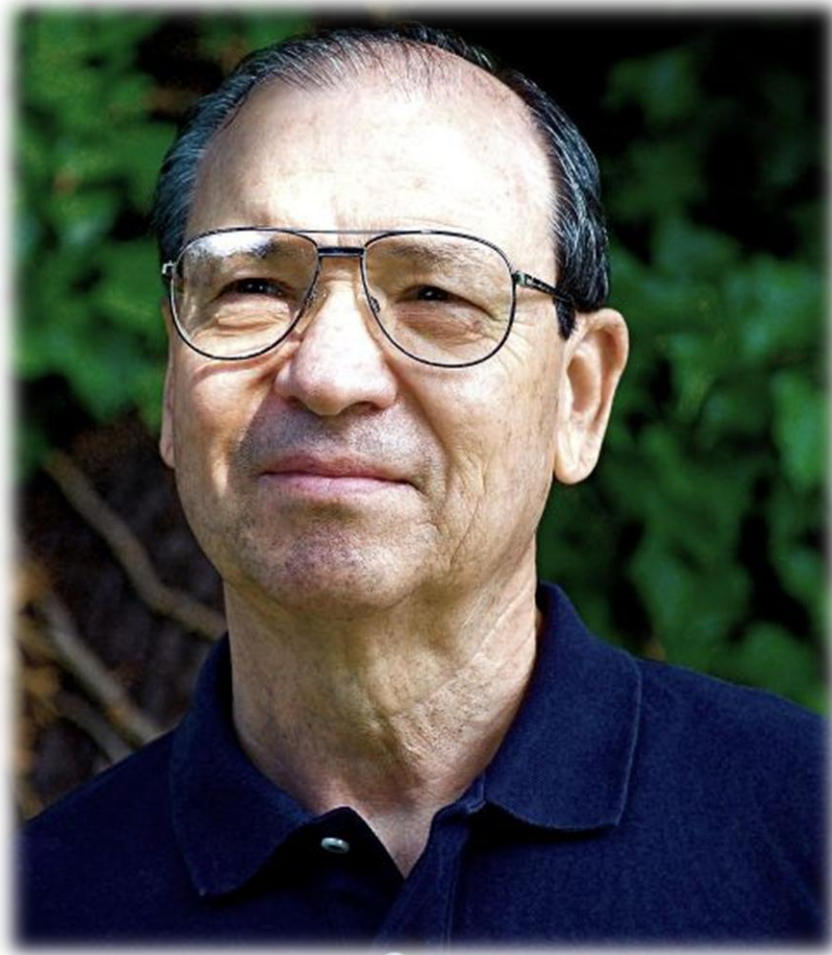
Never do Austin alone;
6th Street was meant to be shared
by couples or conventioners
spilling out from the Omni or Hilton
all wearing IDs on lanyards like mine,
writers and crafters of words
secure in bonded groups
drawn by the scent of 6th Street:
pizza by the slice from storefronts
country music wafting from smoky maws
close by canyons of steel and glass,
while below the suits head west.

Carriages carry lovers east
toward truths tattooed in skin
or take wine and seafood etouffee
at the Old Pecan Street Café
where only waiters see the single soul adrift,
crossing the street against the grain
of poet Thomas Lux
engaged in animated chat
with someone from another gig
but passes like the moment gone.

I ponder ten blocks to the Capitol

but know it's locked by now
so I lean on a lamp
and watch the line across the street,
slam poets waiting to shout
their souls: iambic Texas rap.
At last I stoop to a vending machine
plug coins for a Dallas Morning News
the single traveler's Texas fix,
turn back for one last pass through 6th,
gaze above high patios
of pouring pitchers bare biceps
and burnt orange Texas tees
to seek my compass needle:
the Hilton sign a silent plea:
Never do Austin alone.

Robert Ferrier is the author of four published novels available at SynergEbooks.com, Amazon.com and other E-Book publishers. His poetry has appeared in *Oklahoma Today*, *Möbius*, *The Mid-America Poetry Review*, *Blood and Thunder*, *Broomweed Journal*, *Crosstimbers*, *Westview* and *Metro Library Magazine*. His books, *Rhythms* and *Ambient Light*, each won the Oklahoma Writer's Federation Inc. award for Best Published Book of Poetry. He was a 2007 nominee for Poet Laureate of Oklahoma in the US.



Boy in the Back of a Grain Truck*Lance Hawvermale*

Did Caesar ride like this?
Mounted on gold waves
swelling chariot walls
and rumbling over fields.
Shoes filled with the makings
of bread and bright kingdoms
weary from the labor
of chopping stalwart heads.
Eyes closed despite potholes
dreaming not of threshed fields
but of girls like water
with eyes to cool the throat.

Lance published his first two novels under the pseudonym of Erin O'Rourke. He released his third novel, a murder mystery titled *The Tongue Merchant*, under his own name - and he hasn't looked back since. His writing has won over 20 awards. His novel *Fugitive Shoes* was named to the University of Oklahoma's "Books That Inspire" exhibit. Currently an Assistant Professor of English at Ranger College in Texas, USA, Lance teaches film, poetry, and creative writing courses. Visit his website at <http://www.lancehawvermale.com>.





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