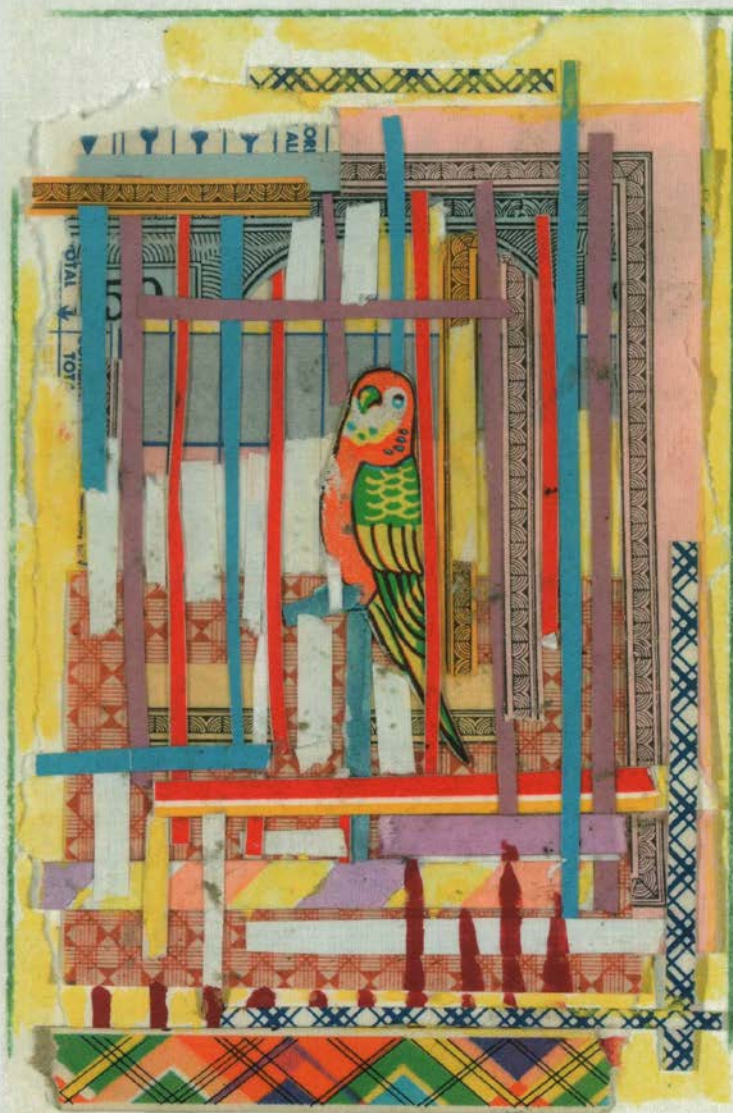


ZOLAND POETRY

AN ANNUAL OF POEMS, TRANSLATIONS & INTERVIEWS



Edited by ROLAND PEASE

NO.3

Tango for the Jealous

If you embrace love as if it were a dishwasher, ignore the greasy scars left on the dishes licked by others' tongues or slashed by the lengths of their knives and forks. Start the cycle and flush them: forgetting is the best detergent. Remember only the glorious, beautiful, shining parts, because platters, especially china, are delicate. Wash them, dry them, and, like a brand-new man, greet tomorrow's breakfast as if nothing had happened.

Especially when your life is approaching or has passed noon, youthful anxiety comes back to you again. You pick up the phone and dial her in vain. Suspicious and fretful, you make even more mute and aimless phone calls to your invisible rivals in love. You call that one again and again (oh, how convenient modern communication), only to be answered by an afternoon empty as a big bowl. Now, please unplug the dishwasher for the moment, and swallow the tangled phone wires like a mass of noodles, splashed with a little of enmity's soy sauce. The dishwasher will quickly rinse off your disgrace.

However, the dark night is an even bigger dishwasher, when you're grieved and all the past dishes are flung at you—unwashable bits of starlight stuck to the dish bottoms. Ah, ignore the noise of the machine in operation, the hum of the dark universe that won't go away. Ignore the shadows which encircle you like left-over fish bones, if the one you love is not by your side. If you still feel like spitting out those irritating fish spines, rearrange them, stroke after stroke, into new lines of poetry.

Little Deaths

based on Jiri Kylian's dance title

Under the wind's quilt, each day
little deaths

Under the quilt's waves, you and I
brandish a sword of nothingness

A sword stabs into the body
to kill you, kill me

A sword stabs into the heart
to kill time, to utterly kill time

Where the tip of the sword points, little
orgasms belong to the quilt

Where the flashing sword passes, little
triumphant shouts and sobs

Little deaths make us
gradually accustomed to the humble triviality of living

Little conquests and surrenders
where neither enemy nor allied troops are on time's plain

Killers and instigators to the other
Assassins and pilgrims to the other

In the lifelong, indolent process of living,
process of dying, indolently

Inverting the sword handle into a pendulum, each day
little vibrations, little deaths