

ALMOST ISLAND

Contributors: Monsoon 2016

Aishwarya Iyer was raised in India and Bahrain, and studied literature at the universities of Mumbai, Jadavpur and Pennsylvania. She has worked as a researcher, teacher, and editor. Her poetry has appeared in journals such as *QLRS*, *Eclectica*, *Kindle Magazine*, *Sweet Magazine*, *Humanities Underground*, and on the Tumblr of *Berfrois*, and she won the 2015 Srinivas Rayaprol Poetry Prize. She is working on her first manuscript of poetry, *The Grasp of Things*, and lives in Bangalore.

Anna Deeny Morales is a literary critic and translator. Her translations of Raúl Zurita's works include *Purgatory* (2009), *Dreams for Kurosawa* (2011), and *Sky Below*, a volume of selected poems forthcoming from Northwestern University Press in 2016. Her translation of *Floating Lanterns* by Mercedes Roffé was published by Shearsman Press in 2015. Deeny's essays and translations of poetry by Alejandra Pizarnik, Nicanor Parra, Gabriela Mistral, Amanda Berenguer, Marosa di Giorgio, Malú Urriola, among others, have appeared in *Pinholes in the Night: Essential Poems from Latin America*, *The Paris Review*, *Mandorla*, *BOMB* and *The Harvard Review*. Deeny received her doctoral degree from the University of California, Berkeley, and teaches in the Center for Latin American Studies at Georgetown University. Her book manuscript, *Sound Dissent*, is about translation and Latin American poetry.

Margaret Carson translates fiction, poetry, essays and drama from the Spanish. Her translations include Sergio Chejfec's *My Two Worlds* (Open Letter, 2011), Mercedes Roffé's *Theory of Colors* (belladonna* books, 2005) and José Tomás de Cuéllar's *The Magic Lantern* (Oxford University Press, 2000). Other translations have appeared in *Asymptote*, *Aufgabe*, *EOAGH*, *e-misférica*, *BOMB*, *Music and Literature* and *Words Without Borders*. She is currently translating the dream journal and other writings by the Spanish surrealist artist Remedios Varo (Wakefield Press, forthcoming). A former cochair of the PEN America Translation Committee, she teaches at City University of New York, Borough of Manhattan Community College.

Ranjani Murali is a Chicago-based writer and artist. She received her MFA in Poetry from George Mason University. She currently teaches college-level literature and writing courses. She is the recipient of fellowships from the Vermont Studio Center and the Fine Arts Work Center. Ranjani won the Srinivas Rayaprol poetry prize in 2014 and the inaugural *Almost Island* manuscript prize in 2015. Her first book of poems is forthcoming. Her work has appeared in *Phoebe*, *Eclectica*, *Cricket Online Review*, *Word Riot*, and elsewhere.

Raúl Zurita Canessa (Santiago de Chile, 1950) is one of Latin America's foremost and celebrated poets. He studied Civil Engineering at the Universidad Santa María de Valparaíso. Along with other artists, in 1979 he founded CADA, Colectivo de Acciones de Arte, an art action group dedicated to the creation of public and political art that would resist the military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. His literary works include *Purgatorio* (1979), *Anteparaíso* (1982), *El paraíso está vacío* (1984), *Canto a su amor desaparecido* (1985), *Canto de los ríos que se aman* (1993), *La vida nueva* (1994), *Poemas militantes* (2000), *El día más blanco* (2000), *INRI* (2003), *Mi mejilla es el cielo estrellado* (2004), *Los poemas muertos* (2006), *Los países muertos* (2006), *Las ciudades de agua* (2007), *Poemas de amor* (2007), *Zurita/ In Memoriam* (2007) and *Zurita* (2011). In 1982 he directed the sky writing of the poem "The New Life" over Queens, New York, and in 1992 he bulldozed "ni pena ni miedo" ("no shame no fear") into the Desert of Atacama. Zurita has been awarded the Premio Pablo Neruda, the Premio Nacional de Literatura de Chile, and a Guggenheim Fellowship. From 1990-1995, he served as the Chilean cultural attaché to Italy. His works have been translated into English, German, Russian, Italian, Swiss, Chinese, Bengali, Turkish and Hindi. He now lives in Santiago and teaches literature at the Universidad Diego Portales.

S. Anand is the publisher of Navayana. Working with the artist Venkat Raman Singh Shyam on the book *Finding My Way* over the course of four years, helped awaken the poet, writer and musician in him that had lain dead for nearly twenty years. He has since found himself often amidst words and music.

Satya Gummuluri is an artist based in the Munich area. Trained in engineering and music, she has devoted herself to writing, music (composition/vocals) and conceptual art

over the past decade, as well as doing editorial and translation work. She has performed and recorded with jazz and improvised music groups, and is currently engaged with Surfatial.

Sergio Chejfec (Argentina, 1956) is a well-known writer in Spanish. He lived in Caracas from 1990 to 2004. He has lived in the US since 2005 and teaches at New York University as Distinguished Writer-in-Residence in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. Chejfec has published more than fifteen books, among them novels, essays and short stories. Many of his novels have been translated into several languages. Among other distinctions, he received a fellowship from the Civitella Ranieri Foundation in 2007 and from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation in 2000. Books: *El visitante*, Excursiones, Buenos Aires, 2016, forthcoming; *Últimas noticias de la escritura*, 2015; *Modo linterna*, 2013; *La experiencia dramática*, 2012; *Sobre Giannuzzi*, 2010; *Mis dos mundos*, 2008; *Baroni: un viaje*, 2007; *El punto vacilante*, 2005; *Los incompletos*, 2004; *Gallos y huesos*, 2003; *Tres poemas y una merced*, 2002; *Boca de lobo*, 2000; *Los planetas*, 1999; *El llamado de la especie*, 1997; *Cinco*, 1996; *El aire*, 1992; *Moral*, 1990; *Lenta biografía*, 1990. Books translated to English: *The Dark* (Boca de lobo), Open Letter, Rochester, 2013; *The Planets*, Open Letter, Rochester, 2012. Best Translation Book Award – BTBA 2013 Finalist; *My Two Worlds*, Open Letter, Rochester, 2011. Info about his novels translated into English: <http://www.openletterbooks.org/collections/sergio-chejfec> Website: <http://parabolaanterior.wordpress.com/>

Siddhartha Menon works at the Rishi Valley School. He has published three collections of poems, *Woodpecker* (Sahitya Akademi, 2010), *Writing Again* (Folio, 2012) and *The Owl and the Laughing Buddha* (Poetrywala, 2016).

Sreekantha Gummuluri is a BEd/MA (Anthropology) from Andhra University and has worked as a secondary school teacher in Mumbai for many years. She has been a lifelong avid reader of Telugu and English literature, and has been writing fiction and poetry in Telugu in the recent years apart from doing translation work.

Subimal Misra is a Bengali writer and lives in Kolkata. A retired teacher, he taught for many years in a school near Sonagachi, Kolkata's infamous red-light district. He has written exclusively for little magazines since 1967. Departing from conventional narrative form, as a self-professed disciple of filmmakers Sergei Eisenstein and Jean-Luc Godard, Misra sought

to introduce film language into Bengali literature. His stories and novels are often referred to as 'anti-stories' and 'anti-novels'. He is known to write 'with venom instead of ink', for his scathing social critique and the 'planned violence' on the reader. Misra is considered the only anti-establishment writer in Bengali literature, and the father of the experimental novel in Bengali. About thirty volumes of his stories, novels and essays have been published.

Sushil Sivaram's poems have appeared in *New Quest – A Quarterly Journal of Participative Inquiry*, *REAL - Regarding Arts and Letters*, *Lantern Review: A Journal of Asian American Poetry* and *Retort Magazine/Bareknuckle Poet*. He is currently in a Ph.D. program at Rutgers University, New Brunswick.

Torin Jensen is a poet and translator living in Denver, where he edits *Goodmorning Menagerie*. His work has appeared in numerous journals including *Asymptote*, *Mandorla*, and *The Volta*. He is the author of *Phase sponge [] the keep* (Solar Luxuriance 2014).

V. Ramaswamy lives in Kolkata and is engaged in a multi-volume project of translating the short fiction of the Bengali writer, Subimal Misra. *The Golden Gandhi Statue from America* was published in 2010, and the second volume, *Wild Animals Prohibited*, was published in 2015. He was a recipient of the Sarai Fellowship for urban non-fiction writing in 2013, and the Toji Cultural Foundation residency in 2015. The translator gratefully acknowledges the Ledig House writers' residency for enabling the translation.

Valerie Mejer Caso (Mexico City, 1966) comes from a family of immigrants from Spain, Germany and England. Mejer Caso has been the recipient of the International Poetry Award "Gerardo Diego" (Spain) for her book *De Elefante a Elefante* and was also the recipient of three grants given by The National Council for Culture and the Arts in Mexico. Her work has been widely translated into English, and has appeared in *Poetry London*, *The Hunger Mountain Review*, *Nimrod*, *The American Poetry Review*, *Translations*, *Asymptote* and *Circumference* among others. She's the author of *Cuaderno de Edimburgo* and *de la ola el atajo* (Amargord, Colección Trasatlántica, España); *Geografías de Niebla* (Tucán de Virginia, 2007, México); *Esta Novela Azul* (Tucán de Virginia 2005, México); *Ante el ojo del cíclope* (Tierra Adentro, 2000, México). In 2015, Action Books published a bilingual version, translated by Michelle Gil-Montero of *This Blue Novel*, with an introduction by Raúl Zurita. The collection of poems *Rain of the Future* was

also published by Action Books, in 2014, and was edited by C.D. Wright, with translations by her, Forrest Gander and Alexandra Zellman Döring.

Venkat Raman Singh Shyam is an artist who lives in Bhopal. Born into a Pardhan Gond family in Sijhora, near the Kanha forest in eastern Madhya Pradesh, his hunger for art led him to do every kind of job from working as a truck assistant to being a cycle rickshaw-wallah in Delhi. Mentored by his illustrious uncle Jangarh Singh Shyam, Venkat has since shown his work all over the world. Most recently he participated in the Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (APT) at the Queensland Art Gallery. *Finding My Way* is his first book, a result of his collaboration with S. Anand.

Viswanatha Satyanarayana (1895-1976) is one of the foremost twentieth century writers in the Telugu language. He is renowned for a versatile and prolific body of work including poetry, novels, essays, dramas and short stories, informed by his scholarship of Sanskrit and classical Telugu, his traditional values, and his studies in subjects ranging from English literature to psychology, epistemology to aesthetics. He adhered to a strict traditional literary style, and displayed a command over classical Telugu which is unparalleled in modern times. Satyanarayana is a Jnanpith laureate and a Padma Bhushan awardee. His prose opus, *Veyipadagulu* has been translated into Hindi by former Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao.