



December 2011

Dear Readers, Poets, Friends:

Words can't always explain, even less restore, what we've lost (or fear we may lose). But witness they can give—a sense that we are not alone in our experience of the world—and that grounding is never trivial. As C. M. Bowra writes in *Primitive Song*, the human capacity to sing our fears and hopes “makes [us] feel less uneasy in [our] predicaments,” “find through the right words an assurance for [our] whirling thoughts,” to be “not quite lost in [our] world,” even to find “a solid center in what would otherwise be almost chaos.”

The forthcoming issue of *RHINO 2012* reflects the temper of our time, including uncertainty, confusion, peculiarity and worry, as much as dark comedy, courage, abiding love and delight:

, we are not certain of any facts

we are not certain of our words, either

Joseph Chapman

*...I've dispossessed / my nomenclature, nameforsake,
I've run, I've hid, I swear I've changed my hairstyle
so many times / now I don't know what I look like*

Nick Demske

*...Remember when auntie threw herself in Twin
Lakes and turned to gospel?*

Leigh Phillips

These poems ask who we are and how we were formed:

*I would have given anything to be from elsewhere,
to celebrate strange holidays, to unpack figs and grape-leaves
at lunch, to camber my vowels into things so precisely deviant
that everyone who heard them would be charmed.*

Brenna W. Lemieux

*You are the bluest shoe.
Walk back to the front for hours, past
broken car hearts, auricles cross
to the other side.*

Andrea Watson

They explore our loneliness:

*And I wound up alone,
chalking words on my lintel,
my lexicon translucent as a streetlamp*

Kathy Goodkin

The odd details of living:

*The undulant spot
Of her leopard-skin tights—*

Scott Challener

Some even offer a kind of advice:

*When it comes to busting down a door
it helps to sing.*

Trina Burke

*Name your whim: "Clue" by candlelight?
Colonel Mustard, at your service. With the candlestick.*

Bill Christophersen

And always they sing of fortitude and daring in the daily trials of life:

*Somewhere a man
Unclenches his fist and laughs*

Antonio Ramos Rosa
translated by Alexis Levitin

*the real punk act of waking
each morning, every morning.*

Christina Olsen

In the past year, *RHINO* has garnered kudos for the 2011 issue, redesigned our website, introduced a blog featuring interviews, audio recordings of poems and much more, while continuing to offer workshops and poetry readings throughout the Chicago region. As an all-volunteer effort we rely on you—our readers, fellow poets, our friends—for continued support. Your contributions and subscriptions make up more than 70% of *RHINO*'s income. We thank you for continuing to make *RHINO* possible.

Wishing you peace and inspiration for 2012, the editors of *RHINO*

*Virginia Bell Jan Bottiglieri Ann Brandon Sarah Carson Helen Degen Cohen
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Sylvia Plath	\$200 +

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