

New Poetry by Paweł Grajner: “Michigan”

New poem by Paweł Grajner: Michigan

Poetry by Amalie Flynn +
Images by Pamela Flynn:
“#150,” “#151,” “#152,”
“#153”



Flow #150

SPIDER / 150

Thick in Louisiana swamps

Atchafalaya Basin

Hot cypress shooting out

Stretching in that bayou

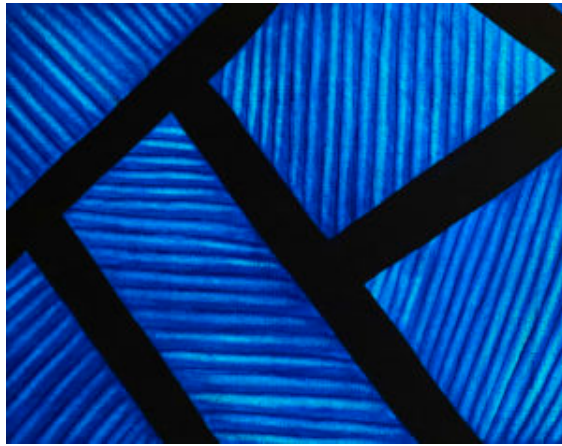
Where pipelines
Pumping black gold oil
Cross across the swamp
Like spider veins.



Flow #151

TRACKS / 151

How I find tiny cuts
The skin of my inner
Thighs outer lip my
Labia
Cuts from his finger
Nails small bloody
Crescents
Like beetle tracks.



Flow #152

SPOIL / 152

Or deep in a swamp

How oil companies

Create canals

Push earth into piles

Push mud into banks

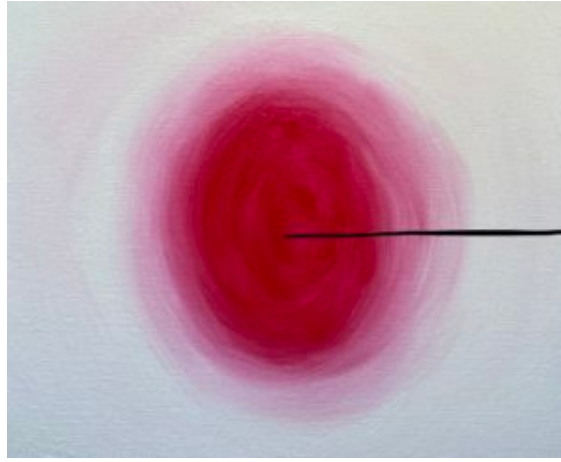
These spoil banks or

Dams

That block blocking

Water so it cannot

Flow.



Flow #153

CLAM / 153

The sky is full of trees

Now after

After he hits me over

The head

With a pipe metal pipe

Hard on

The crown of my skull

Bone and

Suture cracking like a

Clam shell.

[Pattern of Consumption](#) is a year long project featuring 365 poems by Amalie Flynn and 365 images by Pamela Flynn. The poetry and images focus on the assault on women and water.

**New Poetry from Marc Tretin:
“Justin Alter, Slightly
Drunk, Addresses Maya, Who Is
In Egypt” and “Maya Ricci
Alter After Excavating A
Pyramid South Of Zairo”**



HOT WIRES SCALD / image by Amalie Flynn

JUSTIN ALTER, SLIGHTLY DRUNK, ADDRESSES MAYA, WHO IS IN EGYPT

Now as I am hungover and queasy
stumping about the tilting house
and sappy as my face is green,
Maya, your sculpture of Qetesh,
that goddess of sex and ecstasy,
whose torso of clear pink plastic
has a heart made of puzzle pieces
dangling from wires that run to an
automated external defibrillator
normally used to shock
a rapid cardiac rhythm
back to normal, stares at me with eyes
filled with both desire and despair.
Though feeling embarrassed
I touch the pink nub you meant
to be her clit and a soft whirr starts, then
puzzle pieces spin so fast they tear, and scatter
and the bare hot wires scald
the insides of her perfect breasts.
I pull the plug, but the smell of burnt plastic
fills our bedroom despite the open windows.
Why do you have to be gone so long?

MAYA RICCI ALTER EXCAVATING A PYRAMID SOUTH OF CAIRO

As I stooped beneath the
standing sun within the
meter-by-meter carefully
measured order of this
archeological dig and
brushed pottery shards
and papyrus crumbs through

a sieve to sift out the sand,
the heat's strong hands
touched me like a half-
wanted lover, whose warmth
is too familiar with my
body to refuse and that's
why when Jamaal, the site
boss said, "You look
overheated.
Cool off in my trailer."
"Yes," I said, knowing I
wanted to betray Justin
but not knowing why, so
after we had sex and while
I was thinking how can I
use this experience,
I saw Jamaal shave with
a straight edge then I saw
the dead-on right image for the God Set,
a cave-sized skull made of razor blades,
entered by stepping
over teeth made of sharp knives
into total darkness
except for a weak light
piercing this skull
through one of its eyes
and in that eye is a web
and tangled in its threads
are Zipporah and Justin.
Their faces, formless rags.
Their bodies sucked out hulks.

New Poetry by Scott Hughes: “Still”



THE FAULT LINES / *image by Amalie Flynn*

STILL

I never thought of you
as a hopeless romantic; this was news to me.
Are you still meditating? Meditate
on this:
You can take the Mulholland Highway across
the ridges of two counties
and stay high a long time.

We parked there once in your subcompact
in love and unconfined.

From the afternoon shade of a scrub oak
I remember the ridge route home,
the silhouettes of Point Dume and your profile
in the afterglow.

Since then I have been a jack of all trades
and a master of nothing:
unremarkable, unsubstantial, undignified;
unresolved, unremembered, unconceivable;
unqualified, unpublished, unreadable.

I looked for you in the county beach campgrounds
where you went with surfers from your high school.
I looked for you in all the places I heard you were in love.
I looked for you where rumors sent me.
I looked for you in the hills of Northridge
where we walked around the fault lines.
I looked for you among the barstools
from Venice to Ventura.
I looked for you in old Beach Boys songs.
I looked for you in stacks of photographs.
I looked for you in the bottom of a glass.
I looked for you stranded after a concert.
I looked for you at the Spahn Ranch.
I looked for you in the bittersweet words in books.
I looked for you in unsold manuscripts.
I looked for you in the margins of old college notes.
I looked for you in every woman who looked at me.
I looked for you in dharma talks.
I looked for you in shrines.
I looked for you in my next life.

I don't think my karma is right.

Forty years on the hard roads of two counties
and I am

still.

New Poetry by Tony Marconi: “Song of the Roadway Door”



WE AND MACHINES / *image by Amalie Flynn*

...three hundred miles,
 ahead the road more visible
 as the land dissolves in the pink light
 of almost dawn

you sit beside me,
 eyes fixed and restful on my face,
 offering hot coffee from a thermos

while the farm news
breaks morning music
on a local station

i could be here forever,
moving toward an unfamiliar place,
held by speed and the vibrating engine,

touched by the warmth of your breath

i could be here forever,
even as day turns into twilight;
you borne lightly on sheets stiffly cleaned,
wrapping your strength within, around mine;
prepared for tomorrow's miles

we and machines;
only we moving, moving;
i could be here forever...

**New Poetry from D.A. Gray:
"Mosul Reflections," "St.
Martin in the City," "The
Rearview Has Two Faces"**



STOMACH OF A COUNTRY / *image by Amalie Flynn*

Mosul Reflections

Ten years and the place is not the same.
Memory of green hills in a dry land,
cratered by what fell from the sky.
I don't know whether to trust the image
on the screen or the one in my mind.

One I only knew as Sayyd gave well water,
sweet tea and mince meat on laffa.
We were tired from the spring rains,
three days in the stomach of the country,
we sank into the hard wooden benches
and we ate.

I thought of Jonah, not wanting
to travel here, and when he did, enraged
at an apocalypse that never came –
how he rested under a bush then watched
it die.

The father of the family smiled

as I ate – both of us, with time, smiling.

Dost thou well to be angry?

His child in the corner never took her eyes off me. Her mother would glance over, expressionless, as if waiting for something that never happened.

Rain fell like mortars, knocking the edges from the dirt roads, craters in the middle. In a few minutes it would take us with it, descending. We'd see the fragments, some carved reliefs; we'd wondered what we'd destroyed, what we'd left the world – an image of broken rock in need of a makeshift savior.

St. Martin in the City

Hunger sometimes reaches up
grabs your cloak while you're riding.
You can't shield your eyes,
or go into hiding.
Every treasure you've carried home,
is never enough.
A beggar beside the road, lifts his head;
loose skin and sullen,
he shivers and so do you.

* * *

The day before we shipped
I was walking with Preacher
into the Walgreens for cold
medicine and we saw a man
asking for change. 'Pity it
couldn't be him,' Preacher said,

not waiting while I fished for coins.

Since returning the eyes
of every refugee leap
out of every face.

* * *

The stuff of nightmares.

Suffering
you thought you knew.

Sometimes it happens, a hand
reaches out and causes
you to draw back – until
you see your fear in their eyes

both surprised how easily
the veil between you parts.

The Rearview Has Two Faces

Your memory has two faces. The thought occurs
as you adjust your mirror in the chapel parking lot.

The eulogy's done its job, a few tears from even
the most stoic, stone-faced ground pounders,
the cracks in the First Sergeant's voice as he belts
'Smithson,' once, twice and again – as he waits
for a response that never comes.

If you believe

the words-

he defended the abstraction of freedom with every fiber,
never showed late, said his prayers, and flossed.
You remember an emails he sent. 'When I get back,
there's a lineman job in Oklahoma. And the houses
are cheap.' Days before he did it.

You remember

the night

on your property, shooting empties off fence posts.
'I'm not going back,' he said. And you knew he would.
Frustrating as hell but reliable. And you'd rather
have sincere doubt than cocksure and careless.

The sun from the East burns the side of your face
through the driver's side window. In the rearview
you can see your left side turning red.

Yeah.

The night he told you, you didn't sleep, agonized over
what to do about what he hadn't done yet.
And when he showed that morning, early,
two full duffel bags and a goofy grin, you chided
yourself for doubting.

You look one more time.

Sometimes he's there sitting in the back seat,
an afterimage lingering after the flash has burned,
you still trying to regain your vision.