



# On The Left Bank

Vol. 1 Issue 4

March 2023



**As leftists, we need fuel for our souls and our creative minds in a world that seems relentlessly dark.**

**Struggle and art have always been deeply intertwined.**

**We believe one of our core duties as socialists is to help our friends and neighbors believe a better world really is possible.**

**That's why we need your writing, your creativity, and your expertise.**

**Help us weave a better future! Submit your (short) creative writing, poetry, or visual art or volunteer for the editorial board: *leftbankmag@proton.me***

**Contents:**

<b>Gesamtkunstwerk – Emmett Doyle</b>	<b>Page 2</b>
<b>Particulate Matter 2.5 – Brooke Bartholomew</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
<b>Poseidon’s Tongue – Lukas Mongozi</b>	<b>Page 4</b>
<b>Downfall of Untergang – Lukas Mongozi</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>Where is the Commotion – Waaqoo</b>	<b>Page 6</b>
<b>To Never Never Wonder Why at All – Meaghan Murray</b>	<b>Page 9</b>
<b>Speculative Fiction – Aaron Micheau</b>	<b>Page 10</b>
<b>Immolation – David Ackos</b>	<b>Page 11</b>
<b>The Forest Said We Will Be Free – jd hegarty</b>	<b>Page 12</b>
<b>There is No Such Thing as Standing Still – jd hegarty</b>	<b>Page 13</b>
<b>Empire Builder – Edward Sheehy</b>	<b>Page 14</b>

# Gesamtkunstwerk Emmett Doyle

2028: Moving beyond green bans and demands for mass construction of resident-controlled cooperative housing, and having secured the Green New Deal, the Trades launch a general strike for prettier buildings and demand an Art Nouveau revival by the end of the decade. Thousands of construction workers swarm out of cranes and off scaffolding, clogging the streets of Manhattan chanting, "We strike! We swarm! We want fluidity in form!" and "Don't be a scab! Don't be a jerk! Let's embrace Gesamtkunstwerk!"

downfall of Untergang

Lukas Mongozi 3/23

oh how you will miss seeing it?  
electrosmog wings loose splunkering  
witness me chalk videoscreens sirene–diptiously  
unmanicured point–settas  
flora petals arugula  
flowering open palms  
for a box social of nuclear kismet  
we get to be test dummies for zeros  
to give up those pre–destination plans  
dusty gophers under bloom  
stem amaryllis  
unearthed reds hemorrhaging  
like how black cherry liquid  
wears on my hand  
healthy shades of hemoglobin  
snake on fire  
scares expire  
out of pre–alivium bath  
leggings of soap froth  
born to foam  
sodium benzoate edged particles  
to insert a mandible torch  
blushes cherries render  
yellow cake wreck out of bake mold  
nature bent, to a  
vara vara chambra  
rocket–cometed  
river away  
anti–matter covet tunguska  
bombard gutting

# Poseidon's Tongue

(to East Palestine, Oh).

Lukas Mongozi

to tinker with hell means  
ripping fire dragon's tongue  
runs off time east palestine  
a blood clot calcine  
train bended backwards  
stubble cauterize  
tubes cigarettes  
u-boats sterned up  
decrepit colors escape  
out face bulbaceous optic-eye maskery  
within rubberskins  
came burning wart sight  
majorner flasks char-throb  
bellies scour cretaceous incense  
a calamitous, cataclysmic, ruinous life mare  
the torsos smudged soot-angels reek  
and reign  
in cursed East Palestine  
farm-soaked plains  
what that company did those folx,  
is sickening



Clean air is not a privilege relegated to a select few zip codes, nor a luxury to be bought and sold. Clean air is a right for all.

36" x 36".

Oil on canvas. 2021

Part of the series *Two Degrees Warmer*, a visual narrative of climate change as told through the bodies of women.

Where's the commotion?  
The oceans of emotion.  
The voices of a whirlwind

The war wins  
The world ends  
The world cringes  
On a single strand of hope  
The world is hinged  
Why is there the notion?  
Someone else will mix up some magic potion.  
Are we too broken?

Can we not feel the hurt and the homeless?

Rotating globes  
Black robes  
Gavels are bold  
To send a soul to rot  
In a dark lonely world  
Is this what we want?  
Is this the dark world?

What is a degree, what is a family, what is a job, a  
house?

If the world doesn't sleep like you sleep  
Right?  
Like rabbits we escape deep into our holes  
and leave our goat friends to hyenas  
Hungry for a mole.

Where is the creation?  
The created  
The creating some change  
And the League of Nations  
For earth and her natives  
The One human racist.



We kill the one alien  
and We lose a part of the human face  
One species especially made special  
Our differences make us equal  
Today's individual is a reflection of our world view  
A residual of the human condition.  
Our belief is our bodies  
And our view is skewed  
Too fat to lose  
So we queue like clueless fools to remove  
A part of us we don't want viewed  
Just to change others' view of  
Our unwanted hues.  
Scarred by The light skinned  
dark point of view  
why must you look at me  
as if I am not you.  
why compare yourself to myself  
and say yourself is better than myself  
when ourself is just self.  
a different book  
from the same shelf.

do we really need to be the same  
to be equal?  
wouldn't it be boring to read the same story  
with no sequel?  
You see we are beautiful just the way we are  
The thought of our perfection is a hard perception.  
A blessing stuck in a sandglass  
Too afraid to break open the present  
I say I am just the way I am and that is perfect.  
just for once look outside your window pains  
your mailbox is broken  
brimmed up to your doorway  
your doorsteps overloaded

one day this day  
open one mail  
and read what it says  
Where is your compassion?  
A Blind Eye  
you won't cross to see a dying companion  
You're passing your passion on the possible wealth  
Too sick to pursue a probable health  
from the iPhone 6 to the iPhone 12  
but you're still poorer than your Gucci belt  
right-click  
click garbage

do you not love yourself  
if you loved yourself  
you'd have love for your other self  
your other brother and your other sister your other  
health

can I tell you that love has no ending  
just first you must feed your self-love  
self-love is what we are missing  
you are alive but you are not living  
this is why you are not giving  
what we need the most  
is what we already have  
what we need to give the most  
is what we think we don't have

Fear or Love  
you choose what you want  
just know silence is still a choice  
and the choice is yours  
choose wisely cuz we are all chosen  
let's not wait for one great hope  
understand that we create what we want.

- I Am Wordy (Waaqoo)

**to never never wonder why at all**  
**Meaghan Murray**

curled up on the lifeboat in the living room  
shut windows but the cold leaks through  
astral weeks is on track 2 and our wick-low  
candle dims with the mood, worried  
sick when we can't afford it.

palpable, the crooked fingers of capital

i see them stretch us apart, knead my fear,  
a sourdough, a hang-my-head shame,  
wishing we were rich  
lamenting our goodness and gifts thinking  
they're what make us poor.

# SPECULATIVE FICTION

Aaron Micheau

Tell us a tale of  
Undying love  
and unquenched thirst for  
liberation

Help us escape  
without heroes in capes  
We have to all to win with  
cooperation

Set up the scene  
In red black and green  
Blue pink and white  
celebration

Build us a world  
a tapestry unfurled  
a vision of our future  
Imagination

Immolation  
David Ackos

not long ago  
a man burned  
like our planet  
in protest

we didn't see it on the news  
our legislators didn't mention it

did it cross their minds  
did they walk past his ashes  
up the capitol steps  
on their way to wield power

today, neighbors live in the parks  
the forests  
the margins making a last chance for freedom  
before bulldozers and armed men come to take it

this poem is for Wynn  
and the kid who told me "anything helps"  
and "god bless" when I gave him a cub gift card

my despair lingers with hope  
oh, do we all crave  
that immolation?

The Forest Said We Will Be Free  
jd hegarty

The trees remember a time before  
we dreamed, before there was such thing

as the sacred—someone ancient made  
your bed. Somehow older still, the grass

sings the green morning song.  
I promise you the earth was not made

for us to toil and suffer—the moss  
is soft beneath our feet and the earth

sprouts what we need if we trust her  
—somewhere green is always waiting.

The plants know something we don't  
and it is simple: we can have it all

and we will. Entangled like vines  
our roots will know the deepest

the sweetest, the most ancient.  
We will know what was taken.

We will grow towards the sky.

There Is No Such Thing As Standing Still  
jd hegarty

Moonlight glides off the water  
skipping like a stone—earth is  
the space between extremes.  
The surface of the water  
freezes and our lives are ice axes  
clashing against the cold  
—chipped layers and cracks—the way  
we leak through walls. We don't just  
want the present, but a future too;  
do you understand my meaning?

I want to contemplate flowers, learn  
how bats and bees do their pollination dance,  
rediscover the way corn is meant to taste, But the  
cold comes on too harsh and the sun rises to meet  
her. We live in a place worth saving.

Snakes are poison but it's men who are  
hungry, who take from the wells until the  
reservoir turns to parch. We are not meant  
to live like this. The sunset: a promise that day  
comes again—a reminder of the horrors  
revealed by the light. What I'm saying is we  
need so much more. What I am saying

is we have to take  
what has always been ours.

Empire Builder  
Edward Sheehy

Empire Builder is an Amtrak train route that stretches from Chicago to Seattle

Empire Builder is also the moniker bestowed upon James Jerome Hill, a railroad baron in the Gilded Age, who popularized the gospel of Commerce and Christianity Hill said that next to the Christian religion and public schools the railway has been the largest single contributing factor to the welfare and happiness of the people And really who could disagree with Hill except perhaps the Cheyenne the Lakota the Arapaho and the Pawnee

For answers I turn to the Buddad at the bar nursing a gin and tonic. The Buddad blows a smoke ring in my face and sez to me in a voice that rings tired and raw the what and why come together as a duality to form one unified deity

Sounds heavy man I say but what exactly does it mean

Look closer at the back of a one dollar bill my pathetically ignorant friend The eyeball floating over a pyramid. Read what it says. I study the greenback and read aloud

*Annuity Coeptis*



Now the Buddad smiles and remembers like it was yesterday Ah yes Virgil Twenty nine years before Jay Cee came on the scene Latin epic poem Hero's journey The line is from a prayer by Ascanius just before he slays an enemy warrior he cries *Jupiter Almighty favor my bold undertakings* The Buddad holds up his empty glass to the bartender

Yeah I say but I still don't get it

The Buddad sighs Try and keep up Fast forward eighteen centuries A learned gentleman in a very itchy wig had a brilliant inspiration You see he was privileged to be taught Latin and Greek in a fine all-boys boarding school He remembers the line from The Aeneid and slaps it on the back of the American Federal Reserve Note dropping *Jupiter Almighty* too pagan He briefly considered adding a cross instead of a pyramid but that was too obvious and over the line So they went with the floating eyeball thing The Eye of Providence to the uninitiated over the unfinished pyramid a symbol of strength and duration A harmonic convergence of righteousness of cause the defeat of all enemies and a triumphant return

The Buddad looks at me as if I am an idiot For God's sake man It's a direct philosophical link to the founding myth of the Roman Empire We

bring down the sword on the neck of our enemy and cry *Providence favors our undertaking* Now do you fucken get it

I shrink back on my bar stool The ultimate truth thus revealed: *Providence favors our undertaking* Protect the Risk to Investors Exterminate the Indian Menace Got it

I step away to make a not so graceful exit when the Buddad sez But wait there's more Check the scroll underneath the pyramid Without my glasses I squint and read *Novus Ordo Seclorum*

Virgil again sez the Buddad Eclogue 4 in which a small boy is believed to be the savior and one day when he is of age he will become divine and rule the world Sound familiar It's the origin myth you simpleton Virgil had it first long before the apostles ripped him off *The ages' mighty march begins anew* A Sunday hymnal pleaser for sure Grab your wallet young man The collection plate is coming round Lesson over the Buddad throws back his drink and stumbles out of the bar leaving me with the check

On my return the landscape rushes by like a movie shown in reverse The train blows a blue note horn in forests of deep pine We're rolling now picking up speed along a straight track cutting through the prairie of north-central Montana where native spirits once roamed The Empire Builder roars through nameless towns that vanish as quickly as camp smoke in the wind past yards of discarded dreams and boarded up shops clinging to the land like glacial till from a receding lover Roots and vines climb rusted junk to flower along trash-strewn tracks Eventide paints the underbelly of the clouds pink and purple like soft cotton flannel A discordant juxtaposition of majesty and misery The American Era yet unfurls in perpetual prosperous perpetuity fulfilling JJ Hills prophesy as the *Empire Builder* plunges headlong into a tunnel painted onto the side of a mountain

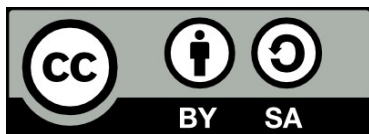


## A Production of Twin Cities DSA

Opinions or views expressed here DO NOT necessarily reflect the positions held by Twin Cities DSA, or national DSA.

Thanks to everyone who has continued to make this project possible, especially Twin Cities DSA for providing printing and labor.

Editors & Curators were Valentine Seebart, Cory Cole & David Ackos



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, PO Box 1866, Mountain View, CA 94042, USA.