

# POETRY ON THE TRAIL

2016



*14 poems inspired by an exhibit of sculpture  
on Hopkinton's Center Trail*

## *Foreword*

The beauty and sturdy usability of Hopkinton's Center Trail has grown out of long collaboration between town committees, community organizations, and neighborhood volunteers—and out of hope that this short piece of trail, this little gem, will serve as a seed for Hopkinton's segment of the regional Upper Charles Trail.

Like the first exhibit in 2015, this second year of Art on the Trail grew out of still more collaboration between trails enthusiasts and artists. This year we were all shocked by some vandalism on the trail, resulting in the complete destruction of one piece, the replacement of others by pieces that would be less vulnerable, and artists coming together to repair and restore and give each other support.

Along with other writers whom we invited to take part, two poet members of the Art on the Trail committee, Polly Brown and Cheryl Perreault, again took the collaborative energy one more step. Each of the 14 poems in this anthology began growing in the mind of a poet who was walking the trail. Reading them, you will see that in many cases poets found themselves responding not only to the art's playfulness, but also to the darkness of the vandalism. A live reading, on September 18, 2016, shared the resulting sequence of poems—art and poetry living together as we walked the trail, with some poems created in the moment by the whole group. Now this online chapbook welcomes you, readers near and far.

On behalf of all the poets, warm thanks to the many people who helped to create the trail and this exhibit, to entertain and move us—and from the poetry curators, warmest thanks to all the poets.

Polly Brown  
Cheryl Perreault

Hopkinton, Massachusetts  
September 2016



# *Poetry on the Trail 2016*

## *Poems*

*Misreading (Armor Dresses)*, by Meg Tyler

*Sociology of a Dress*, by Cheryl Perreault

*Mosaic*, by Jaclyn Perreault

*Hi, Princess Tea*, by Brian Forsythe

*Bike on the Trail*, by Peter LaGoy

*Sculpture Walk*, by Betsy Binstock

*Forest Doorway*, by Polly Brown

*Weaving the Life*, by Cynthia Franca

*1984 Revisited*, by Michael Porter

*Vine Globes*, by Tom Driscoll

*All-Knowing Eyes*, by Janvi Puri

*A Benevolent Conspiracy*, by Trisha Knudsen

*Seen and Unseen*, by Bonnie Bishop

*Hopkinton's Art-Trail Refuge*, by Linda Havel

## *About the Poets*

## *Art and Artists on the Trail*

## *Other Acknowledgments*

*Misreading (Armor Dresses)*

The sunlight strikes  
the torso of the word  
and I see *Amour*  
as a noun preceding  
the verb.

How does love dress itself,  
I wonder. With steel  
instead of fabric

gathered at the waist.  
These garments keep.  
Will endure wind and weather.  
*Love is not love which alters  
when it alteration finds.*

When it fits well, love dresses  
the wounds it inflicts. Is a suture,  
a plaster. Gives off a defiant sheen,  
reflecting all it is cast against.

Whatever part of speech  
dresses the form,  
cinched or not,

love stands armed, aimed, the *ever fixed mark*  
never aflight.



*Meg Tyler*

## *Sociology of a Dress*

*The more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders and realities of the universe about us, the less taste we shall have for destruction.--- Rachel Carson*

How often we take for granted the many stories  
a dress has to tell over time.

Dresses flashing the past of things like  
announcement of femininity,  
flirting to lure a lover, motherhood,  
housewife-ism and the housecoats of the elderly.  
Worn with society's connotations of selfless nurturance,  
submissiveness, and being seen as lesser-than.

While the voices of dresses were less likely heard  
calling for more noble things  
like importance of circles of family and community,  
like pacifism, unity, creativity, communication and love.

These words that emerged from the open hem  
of dresses over time... often unheard  
or misconstrued or misinterpreted as inviting  
things like indifference, disrespect, catcalls, street hollers,  
rage, rape, enslavement and fatality.  
So many lives ended over time  
that were once someone's child, perhaps later  
someone's mother or grandmother.

Dresses also worn by women raising their voices  
to change the world with wisdom and vision for all life.  
Showing us all that there is something sacred  
that seems to come and go and flow  
from head to toe of those who have allowed  
the wisdom and leadership of body and mind  
to be closer to the ground, higher to the sky.

Caring about the larger circle of life;  
like the earth we all come from  
like the grounding roots of the trees,  
like the wild and tamed flowering plants  
attracting butterflies, birds and bees,  
like the reverence for moon and stars,  
rays of sun and flares and lightning streaks.

Voices from dresses who have paid attention to  
nature as teacher speaking on behalf of higher things  
like freedom, justice and equality for all to grow  
and wisdom to know how at some deep level  
every living thing loves being alive, acknowledging  
the importance of every flora and fauna  
every animal, man, woman and child as part of us.

Dresses giving voice to the possibility of lifelong growth  
and transformation of one person... of all the world.  
Like how about cease fight and fire and war  
at the home-front and on the street  
and on the front-line against other countries?  
Like how about fighting for more compassion and love?  
Like how about we begin to lead and see the world  
in circles rather than ladders of who's better than who?  
Like how about honoring that we are all ...each one of us  
equally important templates of earth and life and possibility.

*Cheryl Perreault*

## *Mosaic*

Community  
contribution  
collectively  
converges  
at the gasping crevices where  
cracks have erupted  
like magma between tectonic plates  
that shift uncertain below our feet  
in a constant, honey-slow drift and divide  
rhythmic dance of  
creation, destruction  
occasional eruption, devastation  
rocking us through time.

There is slow cooling,  
morphing, reshaping,  
unfamiliar terrain  
coalesces on the other side.  
On barren, bald, blackened surface,  
find fertile ground. Let us plant seeds of  
creativity. We will nurture them,  
let them grow tall  
towards the sun in spindly hopes  
let them crawl  
to the edge, peer over, unafraid.  
Let them grow verdant and invasive, let them  
cover every surface, sprawl,  
cross-pollinate a rich, colorful  
carpet woven of our stories and struggles  
Let roots sink down deep  
Let roots find a new home.

We trace our marks across the surface,  
impermanent chalk dust layers  
over a renewable slate. In the morning,  
a sudden downpour or  
routine condensation of dew  
may have washed our histories away.  
But I rejoice in this temporary tapestry  
as its vibrant colors dance, boldly reflect  
rays of sun, absorb shimmering wavelengths.  
Let us raise our hands, cradle chalk in our palms,  
bridge the chasms, heal the wounded ground  
with this growing garden mosaic.

*Jaclyn Perreault*





*“Hi Princess Tea”*

Exclaimed one wandering wee-one  
I stopped my leaving  
or was it the words

Hi Princess Tea she dawned  
in yellow maze  
the same as our star  
warming fields near  
or perhaps  
one billion miles from here

Princess tea warmed my return  
A proud seat I too might fill  
Thank you I will

And as I sat my shadow blue  
remained adrift in celestial waltz  
with orbs flown all about

testament of those present  
and witness of those long before  
amongst one this our universe

Beneath stars strewn  
blanketing each our own made true  
as witnessed by eyes pure cast upon  
and Spirits minglers the unseen  
just like today

Just as we each breathe  
and hold dear one truth  
that beholds me too  
as meant by one gentle  
wee ~ little ~ one

Gold as dawn  
shining upon this path  
touching each our own  
passioned way

This my blessed  
one true way

*Brian Forsythe*



## *Bike on the Trail*

I bike on the trail.  
Formerly on my 80s-era GT Tequesta  
Now on my new-to-me Trek X Caliber  
-a 29er in mountain bike lingo.  
I chain my bike along the trail sometimes  
And go for a walk or a run.

So it seems right  
To see a bike  
Chained to a tree  
In the Art on the Trail.

Truth be told, my heart jumps a bit when I pass it  
Thinking another (kindred spirit) adventuring 'long the trail.

This bike's an old Raleigh  
With baskets of wine, bread, and flowers  
A bike for a leisurely trip,  
perhaps a picnic,  
then home.  
A good bike for this trail.

The bike leans on a tree

Between foam people and aqua table/chairs  
All speak to community – people gathering, chairs welcoming,  
And bikers adventuring (one seldom bikes to a picnic alone).

The trail, the visual art, and to come, poetry  
All bind Hopkinton  
In community  
As we greet each other  
As we share the art  
As we pass on foot,  
Or as we bike.

Kindred Spirits.

*Peter LaGoy*

## *Sculpture Walk*

### I

The trail cuts through trees,  
binds together the sculptures  
which are framed by shadows  
and a glint of sun –  
suspended in the moment.

### II

Three ladies, armor plated  
in shining silver garb,  
cluster in the safety of the trees.  
No glimpse of leg or breast –  
only their clothes stand up  
to face the world.

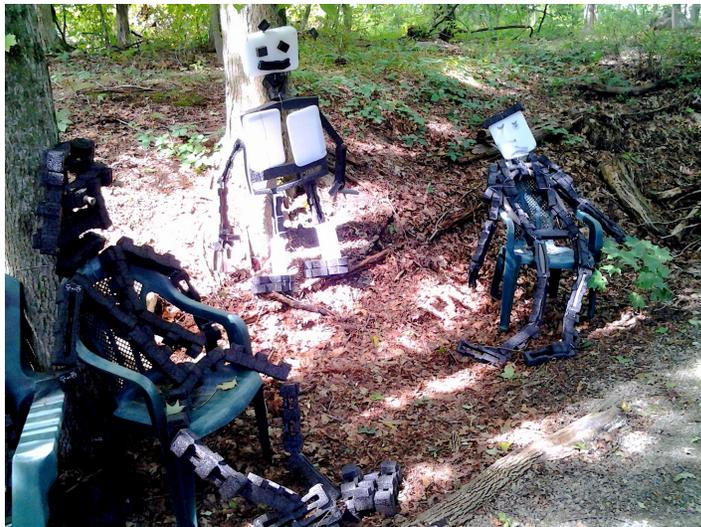
Metal skirts bind tight  
to guard against escape –  
no arms can move  
beyond the tight confines  
of metal sleeves.

Where are the women underneath?  
Trapped and made invisible  
by a world of what should be,  
their wordless cries are silent, static –  
lost in a land where the reality  
of female flesh  
cannot exist.

### III

Family lurking in the shade –  
black blocks of limbs,  
white slabs of face,  
limply sprawled  
against the flat cold green  
of plastic chairs.  
Nestled in the shadows,  
the curve of dog  
with tilted head.

What do they want?  
Will they ever speak,  
reach out a hand to touch  
each other?  
Or will they remain forever  
suspended in their frozen animation –  
each alone, yet posing as if  
they once were able  
to be friends?



IV

The trail wanders on.  
The sculptures rest  
in shadows cast  
by the shifting leaves.  
Tomorrow is forever.

A visitor is free to pause  
and look,  
then pass on by –  
able to move through time  
while statues  
embalmed in silence  
can only dream  
of what might be.

*Betsy Binstock*

## *Forest Doorway*

From the path, only  
the roughest wall and door,

nothing you could enter  
even dreaming.

But when life shrinks you,  
forces that bending,

that crumpling, crawl  
through the low gate

of loss, loss of who you knew,  
whoever you thought

you might be.  
When forward's the one

way, trust these vines  
that join branch

to beam, rough to planed,  
sill to jamb; trust

voices the other side.  
Inch through. Stand.

Out of fog, into shape—  
Look!—all you need:

a roof, a bed, a table,  
a fire, a well.



*Polly Brown*



### *Weaving the Life*

Silence is a powerful tool for self-discovering.

Those "God's Eyes" have captured my attention,  
as soon I've crossed the imaginary circle.  
I'm driving through those eyes.  
I feel myself part of the cycle of protection and coziness.

This place is more than just a geographic escape.  
It's a deep trip to my universe,  
my values, and my real roots.

Where is the poetry here?  
The poetry lives in us and all the things around us.  
The poetry is the whispering of God,  
showing us  
the real meaning of existence.

When you open truly your mind and your heart to the people,  
you are capable of seeing the world with eyes full of love,  
see beyond appearances, and so, see only the good in each of them.  
Don't put labels. Don't judge.  
Give the people the chance to prove their real value.  
That is the wisdom of the universe.

This place offers me a retreat, a way to be eternal.  
It began with a cross: the intersection between art and poetry.  
Eighteen crossings are interconnected.  
I am in the center, creating with my body, my own God's eye.

My personal journey is a unique spectrum of  
colors filling my heart. The energy is powerful.  
I'm feeling the breeze become a high wind.

Now, I'm a kite,  
free.  
Weaving the life.

*Cynthia Franca*

## *1984 Revisited*

Am I being paranoid? Should I be worried  
that satellites and drones look down on me?

My electronic fingerprint is everywhere.  
Product ads I have looked at  
or products I have bought  
crop up in web sites I visit.

Personal preferences are monitored.  
Videos are everywhere.

I am tracked, categorized and analyzed.  
My car knows my speed and destination,  
and shares it with who knows who?

I feel claustrophobic. Is there  
nowhere to go and feel free?

Ah, the woods. Open space. Fresh air.  
Brooks and lakes. Freedom.  
My salvation from the computer world.  
Solace. A sanctuary. Peace.

What do I have to worry about out in the forest?  
It's not like the trees have eyes or anything.

*Michael Porter*





## *Vine Globes*

The talk that day had been of Light versus Darkness,  
upon report of vandals; how some of the work  
we had come to enjoy had been damaged for no other cause  
than destruction itself. It was sad and it was said we should be the ones  
to answer, in this season of rage —here in Anger’s Republic,  
we should be the ones with responding light.

This stone dust path aglow in summer haze,  
supposed as a brighter path to counter and consider  
with shining language how —*we should be the ones,*  
*we should be the ones, we should be the ones.*

Still I found myself drawn, in my own thought, to that darker mind  
that would destroy, the un-creating creatures, their ruinous art.  
I imagined the sounds of hurried breath, shamed  
laughter, perhaps a distant siren —a cicada’s drone—what

the moonlight must have finally admitted then, how there would  
always always be the more lightlessness.

How I wish I had the great argument, lofty and on Light's behalf,  
one precious answer in the shape of a song —rather than this confessing  
what I feel is broken, nowhere to nowhere singing, turning old fragment  
seemingly into something smaller still.

Instead, let me honor the hands that found such perfect form  
as these *Vine Globes*—gathered tangles turned as planets each  
to their orbit's arcing path, empty and whole, arranged in something  
of a celestial gesture, quiet alongside our precious path and just before  
that broad green field's facing the sky, shadow within shadow, held  
playthings of Light's entirety, bends of branch and stem, to their slight ache  
remembered of green seeking, touching opposites, fixed as the simple idea  
in making, a notion of the body as much as the mind.

These tender simple beings, let them speak, from in among  
the overhanging leaves, their own eloquent secrets.

*Tom Driscoll*

## *All-Knowing Eyes*

There's different sets of eyes overlooking the artistic fortress  
Observant eyes, friendly eyes, cautious eyes, mischievous eyes  
All part of an all-knowing, collective mind

There are no weaknesses in these eyes, only concern and curiosity  
Male and female and every race and ethnicity alike  
Those eyes, they are equivalent to the perceptive, patient eyes of the Almighty  
Silent, but alert and omnidirectional all day, everyday  
While not only judging people's morals and doings,  
But also natural events, misfortunes, and happiness

These eyes full of emptiness  
Dreamy in a trance-like state  
They not only see; they listen, discover, explore, experience  
Multifunctional, multifaceted, multidimensional, multicolored  
They see what they see, nothing more nothing less  
But ultimately give response to neither nature nor man

These all-knowing eyes  
Full of passion and desire, yet grief and anguish  
Omniscient and ambiguous  
Don't have blindness, ignorance, or obscurity  
Only truthfulness, clairvoyance, and equality  
"We see," often say the all-seeing eyes  
"Maybe someday humanity and nature will be one."

*Janvi Puri*





### *A Benevolent Conspiracy*

They seem so out of place  
suspended from the branches,  
a trio of black and white dresses in the trees  
watching the world pass by.  
I believe the spirits that inhabit them  
live behind the pairs of eyes  
they've placed along the trail as guardians;  
mysterious, following, alert.

The birds know—the kitchen birds;  
wise pie tin owls and curious grater crows  
and tiny can lid sparrows—all out of their element.  
Or is it me who intrudes?  
I hear them chattering to one another  
among the fresh-felled cedars, their hollow logs  
beckoning entrance.  
If seed were scattered, these minions

would surely gather to partake.  
Instead, when convinced of their safe solitudes,  
they flit and glide, chip chipping their secret messages  
as they land on the frilly shoulders  
of those metal beauties in shades of gray  
statically dancing together in the wind.

Those avian twitterings are carried through  
sunlight and breezes and drizzle,  
passing by the watchful gazings  
to reach The Veil—true wardens of the wood,  
with their sightless perception  
and command of mysteries indiscernible,  
who translate in silence and trust the birds  
to dispatch their glad tidings to the ladies in the trees  
that it is once again safe to sashay.

*Trisha Knudsen*

*Seen and Unseen*

*in memory of Stacy*

Grief is love, I cry,  
for the bride who died.

Her death surprises  
and denies us

untroubled skies  
at sunrise

and the awaited prize;  
though the heart defies,

her wedding day supplies  
instead, a funeral of I's.

Even the trees have eyes:  
God's eyes, owls' eyes,

unflinching pairs of life-size,  
gray metallic eyes,

oracular, following eyes  
full of yearning and surmise.

*Bonnie Bishop*



## *Hopkinton's Art-Trail Refuge*

Here is a green and gravel path of new textures. Where school children-artists wove webs of spidery-safety. Where I am tempted to step into the faux lair to look out. From the inside, I see art created outside.

Refugees escape from danger if possible. I seek protection within this refuge, with views through frets of tree limbs. Colors of cut glass sparkle Pleiades Constellation. I imagine, join into whimsy of wood-recycled as owls. It is as if I'm real when they blink at me.

*Linda Havel*



## *About the Poets*

**Betsy Binstock** began publishing poems under her maiden name (Elizabeth Bartlett Thompson) in *1/2 Lyre, Pegasus* and *Late Knocking*, and in a book *Four Poets, Four Voices*. She writes songs also, performing at open mics in the Greater Boston area.

**Bonnie Bishop** has been looking at art, walking in the woods, and writing poems since she was a girl, and remains uncertain which she loves more. Her chapbook *O Crocodile*, is available from Finishing Line Press.

**Polly Brown** has two published poetry collections, *Blue Heron Stone* and *Each Thing Torn From Any of Us*. She counts herself lucky to live within hollering distance of the Center Trail.

**Tom Driscoll** lives, works, and walks around quite a lot, in Holliston, Massachusetts. He is an occasional contributor to *The Metrowest Daily News* opinion page. His most recently published collection of poems is called *Instead of Peace*.

**Brian Forsythe**, a long time resident of Norfolk, resides along the gentle banks of the Charles River where the constant magnificence of nature evolves and unfolds before him, season to season.

**Cynthia Franca**'s book of poetry in Portuguese, *Poetic Treasure*, was published in Brazil. More recently, she coordinated the Hopkinton 300th Anniversary Poetry Anthology Project, producing a book launched in November 2015.

**Linda Havel** lives overlooking an ancient glacial kettle pond—Cochituate Lake. She has performed often at Hopkinton's *Wake Up and Smell the Poetry*. Her most recent chapbook is titled *Gathering Threads*.

**Trisha Knudsen** started writing poetry forty years ago, at age 15. Her most recent work in progress is a book of poetry entitled *Step, Stumble, Step*. She also sings, performing throughout the region with her husband Phil.



**Peter LaGoy** began writing poetry in the late 1990s. He has read frequently at *Wake Up and Smell the Poetry* at HCAM, focusing on children, outdoor adventures, and nature. His advocacy and energy have helped to shape the Center Trail.

**Cheryl Perreault**, educator, poet/writer, local columnist and spoken word artist, founded and hosts *Wake up and Smell the Poetry* and *Meet Your Neighbor* at HCAM, and the Learning Labyrinth / Writers' Roundtable at Roots and Wings in Natick.

**Jaclyn Perreault**, a lover of science, the arts, and creative blends of the two, currently works as a cancer clinical trials coordinator, and can often be found writing medical-inspired poetry while riding public transportation.

**Michael Porter**, a former first grade teacher and college lecturer, currently owns an international consulting firm. This long time Hopkinton resident has been writing poetry and fiction since his youth.

**Janvi Puri**, a senior at Hopkinton High School, has written predominantly philosophical poetry since performing at her first *Wake Up and Smell The Poetry* in seventh grade. Janvi also has interests in science and engineering, medicine, and business.

**Meg Tyler** is the author of a chapbook of poems, *POOR EARTH* (Finishing Line Press, 2014). She is a professor of Humanities at Boston University, where she chairs the Institute for the Study of Irish Culture.



## *Art and Artists on the Trail*

This list moves from north to south along the trail. For more information, including biographies of artists and artist mentors, go to <http://uctc.hopkintonma.gov/art-on-the-trail-2/>

1000 Homes, by the Hopkinton Library Board of Trustees and June Harris

Fly Me to the Moon, by Cathy Howe and Peter Howe

Armor Dresses, by Alicia Dwyer

Exploding Chalk Board, by Michael Alfano

Real Hopkinton Housewives by Darlene Hayes

Picnic Bike by Patti Boelson

Figurative Sculptures, by Holliston Robert Adams Middle School Artists, with Heather Hebert

Dare to Dream by Geri Holland

God's Eye Weavings by Dinny Potenza

The Dryads, by Alicia Dwyer

Vine Globes, by Robin Batchelder and Mary Starr Green

Recycled Object Owls, by Carrie Howard and Hopkinton GS Troop #6807

Birds, Butterflies and other Beauties, by Carol Mecagni and her Senior Potters

Dress Cut-Outs, by Alicia Dwyer

Totem by Pam Golden

Pleaidian Blue by Cathy Taylor

Circles and Strings, by Sarah Alexander and Lauren Scheuer and students in the HCA Fine Arts Academy

The Veil, by Betsyann Duval



## *Other Acknowledgments*

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Cover: *The Veil*

"Misreading (Armor Dresses)": *Armor Dresses*

"Mosaic": *Exploding Chalk Board*

"Hi, Princess Tea": *Real Hopkinton Housewives*

"Bike on the Trail": *Picnic Bike*

"Sculpture Walk": *Figurative Sculptures*

"Forest Doorway": *Dare to Dream*

"Weaving the Life": *God's Eyes*

"1984 Revisited": *The Dryads*

"Vine Globes": *Vine Globes*

"All-Knowing Eyes": *Recycled Object Owls*

"A Benevolent Conspiracy": *Dress Cut-Outs*

"Seen and Unseen": *The Dryads*

"Hopkinton's Art-Trail Refuge": *Circles and Strings*

About the Poets: *Figurative Sculptures* [group photo of poets at Poetry Walk]

Art and Artists: *Fly Me to the Moon* [full group including some artists at the Poetry Walk]

Other Acknowledgements: *Birds, Butterflies, and Other Beauties*

Finally, many thanks to all the people and organizations who helped both Art on the Trail and Poetry on the Trail happen: Hopkinton's Upper Charles Trail Committee / Hopkinton Center for the Arts / Hopkinton Area Land Trust / Michael Alfano and all the sculptors and their helpers / all the poets (and their helpers!) / Peter LaGoy for the poems on sticks / Cynthia Franca for the flyer / Mike Boelson for all the ways he cares for the trail / all who came to the art launch and the poetry walk bringing us the gift of their participation / and all the people who contribute their peacefulness in this place.

