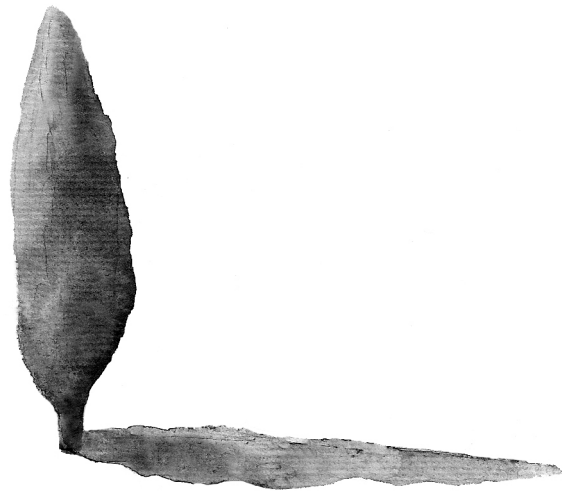


CONTRIBUTORS
THE JOURNAL & WEB PAGES



THE SIGH PRESS
ISSUES 1 & 2 • SUMMER & AUTUMN 2014

ISSUE THEME: A Deliberate Leap.

TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS: Tell The Sigh Press about a recent deliberate leap.

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MONICA DENGU has been working in calligraphy since the 1990s, having studied both independently and institutionally with calligraphers and artists Gaynor Goffe, Ewan Clayton, Thomas Ingmire and Eleanor Dickinson. Teaching and exhibiting her work around the world, Monica has ventured away from tradition and towards an investigation of innovative approaches to lettering, calligraphy and handwriting. In our opening notes, it was Monica who said, "[Forms] of handwriting become a vehicle for visual communication between cultures." *A Dance of Line and Space* won the Sharjah Calligraphy Biennial 2014 Contemporary Calligraphy Award.

WWW.MONICADENGU.COM

WWW.FREEHANDWRITING.NET

WWW.SCRITTURACORSIVA.IT

THIS PAST FALL I received an invitation to participate in the Sharjah Calligraphy Biennale in the United Arab Emirates. I had declined this invitation in the past, but this time I saw it as a challenging intercultural communication opportunity, and accepted. My deliberate leaps have always been somehow irrational and even a bit foolish. I go by feelings and in most cases, it has worked out beautifully and developed in ways I could never have imagined.

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ELIZABETH LOGAN HARRIS' work has appeared in *Glimmer Train*, *New England Review*, and *WebConjunctions* among other journals. Her essay "Black & White TV," published in *Colorado Review*, was named a notable essay in *Best American Essays, 2008*. She co-wrote and co-produced the 2010 documentary "The Bungalows of Rockaway."

WWW.CONJUNCTIONS.COM/WEBCON/HARRIS09.HTM

WWW.THEBUNGALOWSOFRockAWAY.COM

I SIGNED UP, READ UP, attended a writing workshop. Opening session: the instructors were ill-prepared, smug. I deliberated, then withdrew. Had second, third thoughts until I spied a fox approaching at dusk. It circled once, twice, scoped me out before darting away. Decided I was right to protect my tale.

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DEJAN ATANACKOVIĆ was born in 1969 in Belgrade. Since 1994, he has presented solo exhibitions, video and audio installations, interventions in public spaces, as well as curatorial projects. His work has been exhibited in personal and collective shows in Italy, Serbia, Canada, USA, Slovenia, Bosnia, Albania, Germany, Mexico. He teaches multimedia and installation art at the university programs SACI and Studio Marangoni in Florence and at the Siena Art Institute.

WWW.DEJANATANACKOVIC.COM

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I FIND THE IDEA of a *leap* directly related to the idea of vanishing. Things fall into themselves and disappear. The theme of *happiness*, so present in current economic theories, is an expression of the concern for too many things of ‘importance’ that vanish without trace. If I tried to define *the body of our time*, it would be *the body that vanishes*.

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EMILY BYRD is an author, traveler, and student from the American South. She is interested in both fiction and journalism as art forms through which she can explore the human experience.

I HAVE JUMPED on trains, off of cliffs, and out of planes. What I have to do now is much more intimidating: I have to stay put. I am currently writing from my childhood home where I have cloistered myself for the summer to save money. Wish me luck.

LINDA FALCONE'S books include *Italians Dance* and *I'm a Wallflower, If They Are Roses* and *Moving Days*. No one has ever succeeded in overturning her conviction that every page of prose secretly wishes to become poetry one day.

ALL MY LEAPS ARE deliberately infrequent and religiously last-minute. Then it happens: I realize there's the brink of an avalanche under my feet. Alas, the time has come to jump off the ledge and break all my bones. It usually takes about four years to recover. This is where the phrase 'leap year' comes from.

GEORGETTE JUPE is an American social media strategist, copywriter, blogger and a certifiable 'Tuscan Texan' living and breathing all things Florence. Social inside and out, she lives in the moment and eats way too much pasta. She blogs about life in Italy, food, travel around Europe and the world.

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THIS ENTIRE LAST YEAR was one giant deliberate leap—from changing my entire life, my career, even moving to the center of Florence—one day I woke up and decided to follow my passions while I still could: writing, blogging, and most of all learning to trust myself and my decisions.

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KAMIN MOHAMMADI is a writer, editor, journalist and broadcaster. Since being exiled from Iran to London in 1979, Kamin has found it hard to have less than two homes: currently they are located in Tuscany and London. Her book, *The Cypress Tree*, is published by Bloomsbury in the UK and as *Mille farfalle nel sole* by Piemme in Italy.

WWW.KAMIN.CO.OK

IT'S HARD TO FIND just one—I am a confirmed 'deliberate leaper'! Six years ago I moved to Florence not knowing a soul, and five years ago I moved to the deepest Tuscan countryside although I am a city girl. The next leap is going away by myself for a couple of months to get deeply into my new book, another 'intentional exile' which makes me both terribly nervous and excited at the same time.

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ELISA BIAGINI (Ph.D. Rutgers University) is a poet, translator and teacher in Florence, Italy. Her poems have appeared in Italian and American reviews and anthologies; her sixth book of poetry, *Da una crepa*, was published in 2014 (Einaudi). She has been invited to poetry festivals across the globe and her poems have been widely translated; notably, *The Guest in the Wood* (Chelsea editions, 2013) won the 2014 Best Translated Book Award.

WWW.ELISABIAGINI.IT

AFTER LEAVING THE US for good in 2012, I intended to visit NY every other year, but I never went back to Rutgers, the university where I got my Ph.D. I had wanted to, but things always got in the way and, deep down, I feared facing the old buildings and street layered with memories of those years. Then, my American poetry collection came out last year and my first thought was: I have to go back to New Brunswick. Here is where I wrote some of the poems in the book and where I had experiences that ended up feeding other poems later on. It was a leap I had to take. The boarding of the train itself was quite emotional: the old Elisa woke up and started to write.

ISSUE 2 THEME: Three mismatched shoes at the entrance of a dark alley (Charles Simic).
TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS: Tell The Sigh Press about a recent encounter that took a turn and was not, in the end, what it seemed.

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PATRICIA SILVA is a bookbinder, printmaker and educator living in Florence, Italy. Since 2000, she has taught courses in Book Arts, Printmaking, Letterpress, Bookbinding and History of the Book with several university programs in Italy. Most recently Patricia has begun teaching with the University of Minnesota Abroad Program in Florence where her semester-long, hands-on course explores historical and contemporary aspects of bookmaking within the backdrop of life in Florence. University of Minnesota students (spring 2014) Mary Carlson, Ellen Cocchiarella and Erin Pfarr joined Patricia in creating the artists' book *24 Hours in Florence*.

[HTTP://UMABROAD.UMN.EDU/PROGRAMS/EUROPE/FLORENCE](http://umabroad.umn.edu/programs/europe/florence)

IT ALWAYS AMAZES ME how small encounters can turn into life-changing events. How a one-month summer semester abroad in Tuscany thirty years ago could have planted the seed for a permanent move and rooted life in Italy. At the beginning of each semester, I observe my students. I see the excitement, the anxiety, the curiosity and the fear. And I wonder.... how will they change because of this experience? Most will go home with nice memories and pretty pictures to show, but, perhaps, one or two will go back having encountered something they had not planned and will return changed.

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KB BALLENTINE'S work is in numerous journals and publications. *Fragments of Light* and *Gathering Stones* were published by Celtic Cat Publishing. Her work appears in *Southern Poetry Anthology, Volume VI: Tennessee* and *Southern Light: Twelve Contemporary Southern Poets*. Her third collection, *What Comes of Waiting*, won the 2013 Blue Light Press Book Award.

MY HUSBAND came home with a fresh haircut and a tissue on the side of his head. He said the stylist had nicked a mole. Since he had a doctor appointment the next day, she checked it then sent him to a specialist for removal and testing. All he wanted was a haircut.

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ERZSÉBET GILBERT is a twenty-nine year-old American expatriate living in Florence; as the daughter of a librarian and an astrophysicist, her childhood perhaps inevitably led her to the city of Galileo himself. After studying the Philosophy of Science at Colorado State University, she traveled to forty-three countries while concurrently writing her first book, *Logodaedaly, or, Sleight-of Words*, published by Wolverine Farm Press and awarded IndieFab/Foreword Reviews Editor's Choice Nonfiction of 2011—though borders between the territories of fantasy and fact remain too nebulous for any map she knows.

[HTTPS://INDIEFAB.FOREWORDREVIEWS.COM/BOOKS/LOGODAEDALY-OR-SLEIGHT-OF-WORDS/](https://indiefab.forewordreviews.com/books/logodaedaly-or-sleight-of-words/)

AT 6:47PM, I GAVE a man the time. He pressed the red statuettes of a turtle and an elephant into my hands—for luck, he said. I have traded a moment for a fortune, though the nature of the possible world within that fate remains to be seen.

ALEX JOSEPHY: I'm an English poet, living half the year in Montalcino and half in London. I've lived in Montalcino on and off for six years; I've made wonderful friends here, and I learn something about Italy and/or the Italian language every day. For me it's both a retreat and a home. I've been a student and teacher of poetry all my life, and when in the UK I lead a poetry reading group in East London. My poems have been published widely in UK magazines and anthologies, and the online arts magazine

London Grip, and have won awards such as the MacLellan Prize 2014 and the Battered Moons Prize 2013.

IT APPEARED FROM NOWHERE. One moment—empty air, afternoon heat on the terrace. The next—a flash of amber wings. It hovered, vibrating, above the lavender. Dipped a tiny beak. I was certain I'd spotted a hummingbird, the first ever in Tuscany! No, said Anna, just a hawk-moth.

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CATHARINE SCULL is convinced she was born with a black hole in her soul where the appreciation for visual arts was supposed to go. So she did the only reasonable thing: she married an artist and moved to Florence.

BEFORE MOVING TO ITALY, I was a high school teacher. On my flight back to the US this summer, I found myself literally surrounded by former students as they were returning home from a European field trip.

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KATIE RASHID is a writer and editor who recently received a Masters in International Relations from the London School of Economics and Political Science, where she dedicated her studies to the Middle East. She has an endless appetite for both exploring foreign lands and the written word.

WWW.LINKEDIN.COM/IN/KATIERASHID

Driving outside of Florence, I was admiring the Tuscan foliage when I noticed a cemetery different from all others I had seen in Italy. Stopping, I emerged among the sea of white headstones marking fallen American soldiers from World War II. I had entered America in Tuscany.

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MICHELLE TARNOPOLSKY has been paid to work with words for the past twelve years, mainly as a translator. She has also published several pieces on Italian culture for Maclean's magazine in Canada. Becoming a mother enflamed a passion for gender issues, which she blogs about from the perspective of an expat in Italy.

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[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/MAPLELEAFMAMMA](https://www.facebook.com/MapleLeafMamma)

THREE RED HEELS, lit dramatically against Caravaggesque darkness; like a flyer for one of the many Red Shoe demonstrations that took place around Italy in 2013. This image in turn reminded me of all the men wobbling down the streets of my hometown that same year as part of another international shoe-themed initiative to protest violence against women.