

Bulletin

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"The Only News I know / Is Bulletins all Day / From Immortality."

Posant mes pas de Planche en Planche
J'allais mon lent et prudent chemin
Ma Tête semblait environnée d' Etoiles
Et mes pieds baignés d'Océan –

Je ne savais pas si le prochain
Serait ou non mon dernier pas –
Cela me donnait cette précaire Allure
Que d'aucuns nomment l'Expérience –

Jag aldrig sett en hed.
Jag aldrig sett havet –
men vet ändå hur ljung ser ut
och vad en bölja är –

Jag aldrig talat med Gud,
i himlen aldrig gjort visit –
men vet lika säkert var den är
som om jag ägt biljett –

你知道我看不到你的人生 –
我须猜测 –
多少次这让我痛苦 – 今天承认 –

多少次为了我的远大前程
那勇敢的双眼悲痛迷蒙 –
但我估摸呀猜测令人伤心 –
我的眼啊 – 已模糊不清 !

Me áta – canto mesmo assim
Proíbe – meu bandolim –
Toca dentro, de mim –

Me mata – e a Alma flutua
Cantando ao Paraíso –
Sou Tua –

Puuseppä, itseoppinut
olin – jo aikani
höyläni kanssa puuhannut
kun saapui mestari

mittaamaan työtä: oliko
ammattitaitonne
riittävä - jos, hän palkkaisi
puoliksi kummankin

Työkalut kasvot ihmisen
sai – höyläpenkkikin
todisti toisin: rakentaa
osamme temppeelit!

Зашла купить улыбку – раз –
Всего-то лишь одну –
Что на щеке, но вскользь у Вас –
Да только мне к Лицу –
Ту, без которой нет потерь
Слаба она сиять –
Молю, Сэр, подсчитать – её
Смогли бы вы продать?

Алмазы – на моих перстах!
Вам ли не знать, о да!
Рубины – словно Кровь, горят –
Топазы – как звезда!
Еврею торг такой в пример!
Что скажите мне – Сэр?

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IN THIS ISSUE

- | Features | |
|----------|--|
| 4 | Welcome to Our Members: Opening Address from President Elizabeth Petrino, 2020 Annual Meeting |
| 19 | Subversive Spirits: Common Threads in George MacDonald and Emily Dickinson
<i>By Anne Ramirez</i> |
| 26 | Dickinson at a Distance: Reports from the EDIS Annual Meeting |
| 35 | Emily's "Five Little Coppers"
<i>By Krans Bloeimaand</i> |
| Series | |
| 6 | Voices Outside the US
An Amazing, Enduring Encounter
<i>By Dorothea Tung</i> |
| | Ambiente Dickinson / Dickinson's Environment
<i>By Daniele Fargione</i>
<i>Series Editor: Li-hsin Hsu</i> |
| | Announcing a New Translation of the Poems into Portuguese, by Adalberto Müller |
| 12 | Teaching Dickinson
Radical Unlearning: What Emily Dickinson Teaches Us about Teaching
<i>By Ivy Schweitzer</i>
<i>Series Editor, Marianne Noble</i> |
| 16 | Poet to Poet
Out of Idaho
<i>By Kristen Tracy</i>
<i>Series Editor, Jonnie Guerra</i> |
| 21 | What's Your Story?
Far More than "Ten Pivotal Moments" in the Making of Martha Ackmann
<i>By Eleanor Heginbotham</i> |
| 23 | Studio Sessions
I Ask an Old Question of Emily Dickinson in her Bedroom
<i>By Robert McDowell</i>
<i>Series Editor, Barbara Dana</i> |
| Reviews | |
| 33 | Emily Dickinson in Song: A Discobraphy, 1925 – 2019, Compiled by Georgiana Strickland
<i>By George Boziwick</i> |

This issue features the inauguration of a new series, Voices Outside the US. The Dickinson Society is International, but often its meetings and publications are more accessible to scholars and readers in the US. With this Fall's issue of the Emily Dickinson Journal devoted to "Scholarship in English Translation," edited by Eliza Richards and Adeline Chevrier-Bosseau, and the new Bulletin series profiling scholars, translators, performers, artists, and readers from greater Dickinsonia, EDIS continues its efforts to emphasize the international nature of the organization. In honor of the new series, and in honor of the strong international contributions to the Annual Meeting, the front cover shows, clockwise from top left, "I stepped from Plank to Plank" (Fr926), by Antoine Cazé; "Myself was formed – a Carpenter" (Fr475), by Sirkka Heiskanen-Mäkelä; "I came to buy a smile – today –" (Fr258), by Tatiana Polezhakat; "You see I cannot see – your lifetime –" (Fr313), by Cuihua Xu; "I never saw a Moor" (Fr800), by Anne-Marie Vinde; and in the middle, "Bind me – I still can sing –" (Fr1005), by Adalberto Müller.

The images from the Annual Meeting on the back cover include Suzanne Juhasz, Juan Carlos Calvillo, and Cuihua Xu, as well as several shots of the audience at the Zoom presentations, all clearly as engaged by the talks as they would have been in the meeting rooms at Amherst College.

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ANNUAL MEETING

Dickinson at a Distance Annual Meeting 2020

The 2020 EDIS Annual Meeting, which took place on July 31 and August 1, was the first ever to be conducted exclusively online. Planners crossed their fingers hoping to avoid catastrophes, but few dared to imagine what a success it would turn out to be. There were unforeseeable glitches, to be sure – a presenter’s weak internet connection here, a snag with shared slide files there – but any interruptions were more than offset by the high quality of the presentations and the opportunity to see distant members who are normally not able to attend. We are all indebted to the planners, President Elizabeth Petrino, Páraic Finnerty, Eliza Richards, Jane Wald, and above all Adeline Chevrier-Bosseau, who among other wonders prepared the first EDIS YouTube Channel. Presentations are posted on the channel and links to each presentation appear on the reports, which appear on pages 26-32, near the end of the issue. The meeting, which closed with a fascinating multi-lingual reading of Dickinson’s poems and some beautiful musical settings by John Hinshelwood, opened with an important statement by President Elizabeth Petrino, transcribed below.

Welcome Remarks from EDIS President, Elizabeth Petrino

Welcome to all of our members, Board Directors and Friends and the Board, and first-time participants to our first ever online EDIS Annual Meeting!

I am Elizabeth Petrino, your newly elected President of EDIS, and on behalf of the EDIS Board and Friends, it’s my pleasure to welcome you to this historic event. In this time of COVID 19, we are faced as scholars, readers, and citizens with hard truths about our society. The virus has shone a light on socio-economic realities we cannot ignore: social and economic disparities are being brought to the fore in many communities, our health care system is under stress, food insecurity continues to be a problem, as does affordable housing. At the same time that members of our community and nation are being hit harder than others, we also have seen social movements that have raised awareness about racial and social inequity. We are also deeply affected by the Black Lives Matter movement, which has called us to action. We are, in short, living through a time that provides us with an opportunity to change ourselves and EDIS as profoundly as the experience of

teaching through a pandemic already has impacted many of us.

Epochal change happens slowly and unevenly, and in its throes it may seem overwhelming and perhaps even frightening. Dickinson of course saw such change during her lifetime as the nineteenth century brought new perspectives on many beliefs including those pertaining to science, religion, industry, politics, transportation, technology, and more. The Civil War particularly brought to her awareness the violence of war and pressures of opposing political views about citizenship. “Crumbling is not an instant’s Act,” Dickinson tells us, and while this process of social and institutional change may be slow, it also creates a “fundamental pause” for us, perhaps a necessary one, allowing us to rethink our most basic values and assumptions about our world. In “Crisis is a Hair,” Dickinson attends to the delicate balance we face in holding opposing “forces” at bay – and the stakes are high – and safeguard “the Hand / That adjusts the Hair / That secures Eternity / From presenting – Here” (Fr889). In a similar way, though we may not know the ultimate effect

of this transformative time or what shape or size this change may eventually take in the world, we have an opportunity to change our Society as we go forward.

In the current climate, EDIS has an important role to serve as we consider how we might best contend with the hostile and difficult times in which we find ourselves. Our international membership reaffirms our commitment to other nations, at a time when nations have withdrawn their global commitments. Our collaboration with institutions such as the Emily Dickinson Museum and the Houghton Library reaffirms our support for the Humanities and the arts. For the next two days, I want to invite you to connect with old friends and new acquaintances through Zoom and YouTube over time and space. At the same time, I encourage you to ponder what it would mean for us to truly live our mission as a Society in response to the need to build community around racial equity and inclusive practice. During these difficult times, we are being challenged to reflect on how we as members of EDIS can be part of this larger change.

ANNUAL MEETING

In the months ahead, I will be soliciting your input on how we can clarify the mission and identify the major goals of EDIS. With the Vice President and other Board members, I will initiate a five-year plan and bylaws revision that will allow the structure of our society to serve our larger purpose. As we increasingly internationalize as a Society, we are being called upon to use new, innovative ways to communicate and increase our outreach to members. We also must serve the common good as global citizens who are committed to education, scholarship, and civil discourse. I hope in the next few months you will take time to respond to a survey and queries about how you feel EDIS best serves its members. Please also join us for the Members' Business Meeting on Saturday morning, when you can make your voice heard regarding what you most value about EDIS and envision for our future.

Now, to highlights of the conference: I would like to provide a brief overview of the conference and highlight several aspects of how we will proceed. Our conference committee – Adeline Chevrier-Bosseau, Paraic Finnerty, Jim Fraser, Dan Manheim, Eliza Richards, and Jane Wald and I – have worked to bring together a series of outstanding panels and events at this year's annual meeting around the idea of distance and connection. Please feel free to come in and out of sessions, as you wish. Our panels on "International Dickinson," "Dickinson, Disaster, Dimensions," and "Dickinson@ADistance 1 & 2" consist of short talks and presentations about exciting new scholarship from around the world.

A note on protocol: Each panel will have both a chair and a host, co-host, or video organizer whose responsibility will be to manage the technical portion of the panel. As the guidelines you received indicated, we hope that audience members will mute themselves upon entry and then use the "raised hand" function or ask a question in the chat box after the talks have concluded. We hope to have a lively discussion for each and every panel. Needless to



say, we cannot expect that everyone will be present throughout all the sessions, so we plan to record the events and make them available shortly afterwards. If you wish access to these recordings, please send our Secretary Adeline Chevrier-Bosseau an email.

Our two keynotes bring world-renowned scholars to the screen: First, Cristanne Miller, Edward H. Butler Professor of English and Chair of the Department at the University at Buffalo in New York, and a newly returning Board member will present a preview of the new edition of Dickinson's letters, edited by Cris and Domhnall Mitchell, which is currently underway. Second, Eliza Richards, our EDIS Vice President and Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, will present a talk, "Dickinson on Remote Suffering," drawn in part from her most recent book, *Battle-Lines: Poetry and Mass Media in the U.S. Civil War* (U of Pennsylvania, 2019). In addition, we are very fortunate to have Leslie Morris, Gore Vidal Curator of Modern Books and Manuscripts at the Houghton Library, Harvard University, who will present "Emily Dickinson's Archive: A User's Guide," which will provide participants with a demonstration of how the archive might be used to explore aspects of Dickinson's poetry that far surpasses its function only as a concordance or manuscript database.

If you wish to join a local chapter or are active in one, consider joining us with your lunch today at noon for a session with Ellie Hegin-

botham. A longtime Board member and Friend of the Board, Ellie has graciously agreed to share her knowledge and experience with others in an informal discussion. Tomorrow, Ellen Hart, another longtime friend of the Board, has agreed to chair the Research Circle, one of our most enjoyable sessions. If you have an idea for a new project, an ongoing one, or simply wish to join others talking about their research, please consider going to the working lunch tomorrow at noon.

Finally, three additional presentations suggest the new directions that EDIS might take in the future. Two long-time EDIS members and outstanding scholars, Jane Donahue Eberwein and Suzanne Juhasz, will join in dialogue about Dickinson's famous poem "After great pain" in "Dickinson Scholars in Conversation." For many of us, there have been books we read by critics and scholars who seem like old friends through their writing. Our goal as a Society is to create a living archive on YouTube of conversations by distinguished scholars in which they provide literary interpretations of individual poems. "Away from Home" will present a series of short presentations on objects or aspects of the Homestead and Evergreens, allowing us to think more deeply about how these objects, often imported or at a distance, brought the external world onto Dickinson's doorstep. Marta Werner will also present "Dickinson's Birds: A Public Listening Project," which promises to combine both auditory and literary evidence using technology to transport us to a new way of "hearing" and understanding Dickinson's poems. Developing a digital archive of criticism will provide an opportunity for EDIS to serve its members and broaden its influence to a larger audience.

We conclude with a Musical Interlude with the folksinger, John Hinshelwood, and readings of Dickinson poems in translation by five of our members. We invite you to join us for this social event, perhaps with your own favorite drink, as the Emily Dickinson International Society enters the Zoom and YouTube eras!

VOICES OUTSIDE THE US

Series Editor, Li-hsin Hsu

This new Bulletin series “Voices Outside the US” intends to bring lovers of Emily Dickinson’s poetry around the world together by sharing personal reflections on their experiences of encountering Dickinson – whether through their reading, translating or working with Dickinson’s writings – in their own linguistic, institutional or national context. With the success of this year’s remote annual meeting of EDIS and Tell It Slant, the online poetry reading marathon, as well as the forthcoming Emily Dickinson Journal special issue on “Scholarship in English Translation,” the editors of this new section, who will ultimately number scholars from all around the world, hope to provide more platforms to enhance global exchange and interconnectedness, to invite more people to explore how Dickinson’s poetry continues to offer solace, hope, and inspiration for various generations of readers, writers, translators, artists and scholars across the globe. In a time of global pandemic and social distancing, when individual need for emotional (as well as physical) intimacy and solidarity is deeply felt on a daily basis, the section attempts to offer new perspectives not only on how Dickinson’s works are transmitted, received or adapted across space and time in various social and cultural environments, but how individual lives in disparate parts of the world are touched and reshaped through encounters with Dickinson. By forging friendship through an international community of Dickinson readers, we hope an alternative paradise can be gathered.

*– Initial Series Editor, Li-hsin Hsu
Taipei*

An Amazing, Enduring Encounter

By Dorothea Tung

Dorothea Tung received her MA in English Language and Literature from Fu Jen Catholic University. She translated Selected Poems by Emily Dickinson in Chinese Translation, Volume One and Volume Two, with George Lytle. She compiled and translated Selected Letters by Emily Dickinson in Chinese Translation and Selected Poems of English Romantic Poetry in Chinese Translation. She is the translator of Shattering the Myths: Taiwanese identity and the legacy of KMT colonialism by Laurence Eyton. Her essays and articles have appeared in numerous Taiwanese publications, among them The Liberty Times, United Daily News, The News Lens, and Newtalk. She was an adjunct lecturer in the English Teaching Department of National Hsinchu University of Education from 2003-2014. Dorothea and I met during a 2014 Dickinson conference in Shanghai, organized by Baihua Wang. We ended up spending the whole evening discussing Dickinson and poetry in her hotel room, with a number of conference speakers, including Alfred Habegger, whose biography of Dickinson we both admired. This unexpected, lovely encounter remains a highlight in my stay in China. In 2017, the year she had three translations of Dickinson published in Taiwan, Dorothea also gave a talk in my Dickinson seminar. Her friendly and engaging approach towards translating Dickinson helps popularize Dickinson’s poetry among the younger generation of Taiwanese readers in ways that are subtle and yet profound.

My encounter with Emily Dickinson began in 1984, in my Freshman English class at Chinese Culture University in Taiwan. The first poem taught in the class was “A loss of something ever felt I –” (Fr1072). I was somewhat lost in the poem’s maze-like structure, the odd word combinations, the punctuation, religious implications, and the arrangement of the phrases until our instructor Mr. George Lytle, who studied Anthropology at the University of Maryland, and graduated from the Institute of

Chinese Literature at Yale University, with degrees in Chinese Literature and Japanese Studies, explained the poem’s meaning to us in English. Although I had a better understanding of the poem after Mr. Lytle’s explanation, many questions remained lingering in my head. But the first two lines of the last stanza, “And a Suspicion, like a Finger / Touches my Forehead now and then,” really fascinated me. The image of “a Suspicion” as “a Finger” that occasionally touches the speaker’s “Forehead” brought a viv-

id picture to me, a beginner in English poetry at that time.

I’ve always had a keen interest in literature, especially poetry, and Mr. Lytle has been in love with her poems since he was a junior high school student. Hence in 1989 I went to him with a proposal: The two of us should work together as a team to translate a selection of Dickinson’s poems into Chinese, with an introduction to her life and notes on the individual poems. At first Mr. Lytle resisted. He

VOICES OUTSIDE THE US

thought it would be too difficult to try to translate her unique style of poetry into Chinese. Besides, he didn't consider himself a Dickinson scholar and therefore didn't think he was qualified. But I persisted. He finally agreed, and so a journey began. And it has continued to this day.

We worked together in the old-fashioned way. It was in the late 1980s and the early 1990s, before the Internet and email became ubiquitous. Mr. Lytle and I would meet at a coffee shop, and we would go over one, two, or a few of Dickinson's poems each time. Mr. Lytle would read the chosen poems first and then translate them line by line into what he would describe as his crude Chinese, and point out the allusions, colloquialisms, cultural and religious backgrounds, grammatical difficulties or uncertainties, etc., while I would take notes and ask questions. I then would go home with my notes, work out a translation, and return with them for him to read and comment on.

At first, we had some very candid and sharp disagreements over the translations. Because I still didn't fully understand that Dickinson's style could be so idiosyncratic, I would often try to translate Dickinson's sometimes rough, cryptic, puzzling, elliptical, fragmented English into smooth, flowing, and beautiful Chinese. Mr. Lytle felt this was a betrayal of Dickinson's style and would argue with me. As for me, I felt his suggestions were often just too crude and unpoetic. Mr. Lytle said since he was not a native speaker of Chinese, he was not the best judge of the literary merits of a piece of Chinese writing. Like-

wise, since I am not a native speaker of English, much less the American En-

I would often try to translate Dickinson's sometimes rough, cryptic, puzzling, elliptical, fragmented English into smooth, flowing, and beautiful Chinese. Mr. Lytle felt this was a betrayal of Dickinson's style and would argue with me. As for me, I felt his suggestions were often just too crude and unpoetic.

glish of Massachusetts in the mid- to late- 19th century, I might not be the best judge of the literary characteristics of the original English that Dickinson used. Only when I started to understand just how odd, idiosyncratic, and jarring Dickinson's poetry could be to the ears and minds of native speakers of English



Photo Credit: Nancy Lytle

Dorothea Tung at the Homestead in 1997.

did I begin to write with more caution, experimenting with a rougher, odder, and more jarring Chinese in my translations of Dickinson. Finally, I somewhat got the hang of it.

Our first translated, annotated collection of Emily Dickinson's poems was published in Taiwan in 2000 by Owl Publishing House, bringing Dickinson to the general reading public. We were

gratified to see how well our book was received by critics and the general public alike and very happy to have played a part in bringing Emily Dickinson and her poetry to the people of Taiwan and the Chinese reading public around the world. I was especially honored to receive a phone call from the poet 痲弦 (Ya Hsuan), who is renowned in the Chinese-speaking world and whose poetry I have fondly read since my teenage years. He called me from Canada, where he still lives, to tell me that he liked this translated collection of Dickinson's poetry very much and congratulated us for having done a good job. He is a lover of Dickinson's poetry and has once thought about translating her poems into Chinese himself.

An updated edition of the collection was published in 2006 by the Ecus Publishing House in Taiwan. The latest edition, titled *Selected Poems by Emily Dickinson in Chinese Translation*, Volume One, in English, was published in 2017 with a new Chinese title «我是個無名小卒» ("I'm Nobody") and a completely redesigned cover. In the same year, *Selected Poems by Emily Dickinson in Chinese Translation*, Volume Two was also published in Taiwan with the Chinese title «我居住在可

能裏» ("I Dwell in Possibility"). They were both the results of my collaboration with Mr. George Lytle.

Again in 2017, *Selected Letters by Emily Dickinson in Chinese Translation* was published by the Azoth Books in Taiwan with the Chinese title «這是我寫給世界的信» (*This is my Letter to the World*). I was the sole compiler and translator of this annotated collection of letters by

VOICES OUTSIDE THE US

Emily Dickinson. The letters I chose to translate are mainly about her emotional life, such as the famous three Master Letters, one of her long passionate letters to Sue, her mysterious poem letter to Samuel Bowles, her love letters to Otis Philip Lord, and other letters to her male friends when she was a young woman.

In 2019, the 2006 updated edition of the poetry collection was published in China by Changjiang Literature and Art Publishing House with the Chinese title «我用古典的方式愛過你» (*Once Loved You in a Classical Way*).

Back in 1997, I paid a visit to the Dickinson Homestead in early autumn. When approaching her bedroom, I couldn't bring myself to believe that my dream of visiting her home

had come true! It's somewhat like homecoming emotions, along with awe and excitement.

During my visit, I met Mr. John Lancaster, then curator of the Archives and Special Collections at Amherst College. He told me he had something very special to show me. So I held my breath and waited. With a mischievous smile he opened his hand. . . . What magic! I almost fell off the chair at the moment when I saw a lock of Dickinson's hair before me! When I took this journey from Taiwan to Amherst, I didn't expect to see a precious ringlet from Dickinson herself. I had read her own description about her hair, but I had no idea that she left behind such tangible evidence of her existence in the world! The image of her lock of hair has lived in my mind ever since, a companion on my enduring journey through her poetry.

I came across Daniela Fargione's book on Dickinson this year while working on a special issue for the Emily Dickinson Journal. I was impressed with the creativity involved in her experimental project. Coincidentally, Fargione and I both spent a summer in Edinburgh as IASH fellows. Also, I just acquired a beautifully printed Italian edition of Dickinson's Herbarium facsimiles recently, and have been curious about Dickinson's presence in Italy. Fargione's piece on the contemporary Italian reception of Dickinson – its thriving music, visual art and literary scene there, provides a refreshing and inspiring insight into the interdisciplinary nature (as well as global impact) of Dickinson's work.

Ambiente Dickinson / Dickinson's Environment

by Daniela Fargione

In a letter to his wife dated 16 August 1870, Thomas Higginson wrote of his encounter with Emily Dickinson and included her definition of poetry:

If I read a book and it makes my whole body so cold no fire can ever warm me, I know that is poetry. If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know that is poetry. These are the only ways I know it. Is there any other way? (L342a.)

Poetry, for Emily Dickinson, was a physical experience, a domain where to make the abstract tangible. After all, *this* is the Poet: "It is That / Distills amazing sense / From Ordinary Meanings –" (Fr446).

It is this "ordinary" trait of her poetics that I appreciated when, as a graduate student at the University of Turin, I had the chance to study American literature with Barbara Lanati, one



Fig. 1. Matilde Domestico, *Il mondo in una tazza*. (The world in a cup) Palazzo Madama, Spazio Atelier (February 2015). Photo by Claudio Cravero. Courtesy of the artist.

VOICES OUTSIDE THE US



Fig. 2. “Portami il tramonto in una tazza” (2008) by Matilde Domestico. Photo by Tommaso Mattina. Courtesy of Ermanno Tedeschi Gallery.

of the most renowned scholars and translators of Emily Dickinson’s poetry. Her constant encouragement led me to Amherst in 1993, when I was accepted as a Fulbright PhD student at the University of Massachusetts. Back then, seminars on Emily Dickinson’s poetry were offered at The Homestead. Today, almost thirty years later, the wooden smell of the house interiors melancholically lingers in my nostrils, together with the sweet scent of summer flowers that I could enjoy in Emily’s garden beaming in a “certain Slant of light.” Amherst light.

When, many years later, I became both a translator and a professor of American literature myself, my first objective while teaching Emily Dickinson’s poems was to alleviate my students’ discomfort when reading her lyrics: their disorientation – more today, I believe, than in the past – probably derived from a lack of familiarity with a concise language that often-times intimidated them. Moreover, convinced that poetry has a transformative power that other genres cannot grant, I also obstinately challenged the image of the “virgin of Amherst” as a shy, well-educated, pious, fragile woman as it emerged from most textbooks that my students had studied in high school. Indeed, this image collides with the portrait of an ironic, passionate, unorthodox, transgressive woman that only a few intrepid biographers and translators have had the skill to restore.

This was also the aim of an Italian artist, Matilde Domestico, whom I first met at an exhibition in Turin, where she lives and works. The originality of her poetics consists in a unique plastic language that revolves around one formal obsession, namely the eclectic and multiform use of one single domestic object: the cup. In her sculptures, installations, and performances, the

cup “serves as both substance and language to humorously communicate what lies beyond mere functionalism” (Mulatiero 2008), but also – when combined with other china fragments, broken crockery, chipped spouts and saucers – as the reminder of our fragile and defective existence. Matilde Domestico and I started collaborating on the re-construction of Emily Dickinson’s room, with the intention to evoke the same personal dilemmas and complexities that emerged from the reading of her poems and letters.

One artifact, in particular, seems to epitomize some of the most daunting issues that pervade Emily Dickinson’s existential quest: Domestico’s cup “Portami il tramonto in una tazza” (“Bring me the sunset in a cup” Fr140, Figs. 1 and 2).

In the poem, the speaker confirms an attraction to what is inaccessible, and using a fanciful language demands that nature’s wonders be brought to her to be possessed through containment. The sunset metaphor, moreover, taps into the reader’s visual memory, summoning the nostalgic declining phase of the day and possibly evoking somber thoughts on the stifling circumscription of the poet’s fatherly domestic space and of the poet’s surrounding parochial geography. Deviating from her usual material – white china – Matilde Domestico creates her cup with handmade paper and writes Dickinson’s verses with metallic staples, so cold and cruel in their adamantine precision. Lastly, the artist surrounds her cup with a glass ball to remind us that the poet’s “Business is Circumference,” as she claimed in her fourth letter to Thomas W. Higginson. The interconnections of all these different themes provide an engaging platform for the exploration and assessment of multiple individual issues, which may lead to a deeper understanding of the human experience, so that Domestico’s cup finally serves as both the exemplifier and narrator of our “porcelain life.”

In 2013, Matilde Domestico and I decided to publish the results of our collaboration. *Ambiente Dickinson. Poesie, sculture, nature* is thus an example of collaborative art (literary criticism, poetry, sculpture, photography) aiming at exploring the different environments in which “the myth of Amherst” lived and wrote. This is also the first Italian critical work on Emily Dickinson that analyzes the poet’s enigmatic life and her desecrating poetry from an ecocritical perspective. Poetry is a powerful tool, and Emily Dickinson used it to subvert the dominating ideology of domesticity, while proposing a counter-discourse to the rhetoric of dominion that often equates women and nature. Although she never showed full ecological awareness and cannot be entirely considered a “nature poet,” Emily Dickinson offered “attention to [...] the more-than-human world around us” (Bryson), to eventually come to the *modern* conclusion that

VOICES OUTSIDE THE US

neither the dominant patriarchy, nor the Church, and not even science could solve her existential riddles.

In several studies illustrating the relations of Emily Dickinson with her surrounding environment, scholars have focused on her passion for the woods, her garden, Pelham Hills and, of course, her beloved flowers (Angelo; Asahina; Farr and Carter to name a few). A few scholars have also revealed how these interests were linked to the onset of a cultural debate on the environment that would soon result in an “environmental imagination,” in the words of Lawrence Buell. Christine Gerhardt has called it “bioregionalist.” The main ambition of ecological writing and criticism is to enhance a new ecological awareness, the first step towards significant social change (Slovic; Zapf), while their “revolutionary” assumption consists in the radical substitution of values within a sick society and a sick planet. The role of literary texts, when conscious of the ecosystems they belong to, is to solicit corrective responses and practices that could be both effective and long lasting. Emily Dickinson’s hesitation on anthropocentric positions is often replaced by experiments in subtle biocentrism, a different way of living her space in harmony with the natural world. This “double dwelling” represents Emily Dickinson’s real challenge: to subvert the granite patriarchal conventions of Victorian time and to reclaim “naturally feminine” roles and spaces.

Over the years, *Ambiente Dickinson* has evolved into a theatrical performance (*Dickinsong with Malecorde*), and an exhibition that has travelled through Italy, from performances at the Circolo dei Lettori in Torino and international poetry festivals in Torino and Genoa, to presentations and discussions at the Bogliasco Foundation as well as several presentations at inter-

national book fairs in Torino (Fig. 3). Those wishing to explore further may begin with the following web links:

http://621018634.ip.fastwebnet.it/pdf/2009/festivalpoesia/programma_parolespalancate.pdf
<https://oblompoesia.wordpress.com/tag/daniela-fargione/>
<http://bookblog.salonelibro.it/lingua-madre-3/>
<https://www.palazzomadatorino.it/it/eventi-e-mostre/il-mondo-una-tazza-storie-di-porcellana>
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Former Fulbright scholar at the University of Massachusetts, Daniele Fargione currently teaches Anglo-American Literatures at the University of Turin. Her research interests include environmental humanities (climate change, food and migrations); the interconnections of contemporary American literatures and the other arts (music and photography); theory and practice of literary translation. Among her latest publications: ContaminAzioni ecologiche. Cibi, nature e culture, co-edited with Serenella Iovino (Led Edizioni, 2015) and Antroposcenari. Storie, paesaggi, ecologie (Il Mulino, 2018), co-edited with Carmen Concilio.



Fig. 3. International Book Fair, Turin, Italy, 9 May 2014. Ph. By Claudio Cravero. Courtesy of the artist (From the left: D. Finocchi, M. Domestico, D. Fargione)



The Belle in Brazil: A New Translation by Adalberto Müller

Emily Dickinson. Poesia Completa, v. 1. Os Fascículos. Foreword by Cristanne Miller. Translation, notes and afterword by Adalberto Müller. Brasília; Campinas: Editora da UnB; Editora da Unicamp, 2020. 880p. Bilingual.

Adalberto Müller spent the last eight years translating the complete poems of Emily Dickinson into Portuguese in Brazil. The bilingual edition, published in Brazil, is split into two volumes. The English text follows Cristanne Miller's edition of *Emily Dickinson's Poems as She Preserve Them* (Harvard 2016). The first volume contains the complete text of the 40 fascicles and the translations, and was published in November 2020. The second volume, which contains all the poems outside the fascicles, is currently being edited to appear by July 2021. The publishers are the press of two of the top 10 universities in Brazil: Universidade de Brasília (UnB) and Universidade de Campinas (Unicamp). The foreword for volume 1 was written by

Cristanne Miller especially for this edition. The cover and illustrations are samples from Dickinson's Herbarium.

This book will interest all scholars of Dickinson, as well as people interested in understanding the reception of her poetry abroad, and most especially students and scholars from the fields of Latino studies and translation.

Adalberto Müller is an Associate Professor for Literary Theory at the University Federal Fluminense in Rio de Janeiro. He was a Visiting Scholar at The University at Buffalo in 2018 and at Yale University in 2013, and he has been a member of the Emily Dickinson Internation-

al Society since 2015. Besides publishing two collections of essays, he has translated works by e. e. cummings, Paul Celan, and Francis Ponge. His recent works are a collection of texts on plants – Transplantations (from my mother's garden), 2019; a book of short stories – O Traço do calígrafo, 2020; and Walter Benjamin: Teses sobre a História. Edição Crítica (with Márcio Seligmann-Silva). The book will be sold in Brasil by Editora da Unicamp and by major bookstores and international retailers. Editora da Unicamp also sells to schools and universities abroad, and can be contacted via email: vendas@editora.unicamp.br; or by the website: https://www.editoraunicamp.com.br/

A quem vê o rosto teu –
Sem parcelas – sem queixas –
Só posso ser – o teu Judeu!
Sei que é uma "Golconda" –
Pra tal sonho – sou pequena –
Ter um sorriso – teu – e sempre –
Muito melhor – que uma Gema!

Ao menos – consola – saber –
Que lá existe – um Ouro –
Embora eu saiba, a tempo –
A distância – do Tesouro!
Longe – longe – não agarro –
Esta pérola – não se estima –
Que escorreu-me entre os dedos –
Ainda – na escola – de Menina!

Querida Sue –
Como vês
Eu me lembro.
Emily

[1862]

TEACHING DICKINSON

Series Editor, Marianne Noble

Ivy Schweitzer is Professor of English and teaches in the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Program at Dartmouth College. She has for several years maintained a blog called *White Heat, Emily Dickinson in 1862* (which can be found at <https://journeys.dartmouth.edu/whiteheat/> and to which you can subscribe). She is the author of *Perfecting Friendship: Politics and Affiliation in Early American Literature as well as many other works about colonial and 19th-century literature in the US. She was interviewed by Renée Bergland for the Spring 2018 issue of the Bulletin, and for the Spring 2017 issue she contributed a review essay of the Morgan Library Exhibition, "I'm Nobody! Who Are You?" The Life and Poetry of Emily Dickinson* and the accompanying catalogue, *The Networked Recluse: The Connected World of Emily Dickinson*. With the Spring 2021 issue, she will become the series editor of *Poet to Poet*, replacing Jonnie Guerra.

Radical Unlearning: What Emily Dickinson Teaches Us about Teaching

By Ivy Schweitzer

For apart from inquiry, apart from the praxis, individuals cannot be truly human.

— Paulo Freire

My title's first arresting phrase comes from a seminar I co-directed in Spring 2017 for the Gender Research Institute at Dartmouth College. The subtitle on that occasion was "Feminist Reflections on Transgression, Humility and Chaos," and it was a version of "Telling Stories for Social Change," the course I developed and have been offering with my collaborator Pati Hernandez since 2007. It is based on the work of Brazilian philosopher Paulo Freire, whose stirring manifesto *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1972) has challenged me to completely renovate my teaching methods. (For more information on Freire and free .pdfs of his texts, including *Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy and Civic Courage*, which is directed specifically at teachers, visit <https://www.freire.org/paulo-freire/>.)

Broadly speaking, Freire advocates education as the practice of freedom. He rejects what he calls the "banking method," in which lecturing teachers deposit information into passive students, for a "problem-solving" approach to authentic questions in which we all become teachers and learners in an aspirationally democratic classroom. How we go about enacting such a practice

(especially at this moment when our president touts "patriotic education" based on the ideological suppression of history) is complicated but exhilarating. And, as bell hooks demonstrates in her poignant essay on Freire from her indispensable collection, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*, this critical pedagogy is a necessary foundation for the great reckoning about race, class and gender we are facing today as a nation.

The passage from *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* I quote most often and contemplate most deeply is this:

For apart from inquiry, apart from the praxis, individuals cannot be truly human. Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other.

There are several ways to apply this gnomic articulation of epistemology, most of them requiring students and teachers to *unlearn* what we have absorbed from the educational system about defining and measuring success. One basic unlesson I have gleaned from Freire is to embrace what designers call "lateral thinking," a practice we borrowed from our colleagues in Dartmouth's

Engineering program (for more, see Edward de Bono's *Lateral Thinking: Creativity Step by Step*). Lateral thinking encourages us to relinquish the goal of covering material, of moving vertically in a straight line from a question towards a single answer, *the* answer, in favor of *discovering* as many approaches and responses to questions or problems as possible. In this way, lateral thinking fosters an attitude of openness, wonder and curiosity, not the instrumentalist need to find the "right" answer, which demonizes failure, forestalls surprises, and ends investigation.

Resisting interpretation, defying logic and narrative, offering myriad poems with an "occluded center," gleefully engaging in riddling, mysteries and "choosing not choosing": Few writers facilitate radical unlearning better than Emily Dickinson. I offer three examples from three different teaching situations of the various lessons Dickinson, as filtered through Freire, has taught me about teaching.

I came to Dickinson studies late in my professional career – as a kind of second field specialty. For years I had included Dickinson's poems and letters in various iterations of courses on American Literature and Poetry, and finally, in a recent, exuberant departure inspired by Dickinson titled "Tell it Slant: Female, Black, Queer Readings in

TEACHING DICKINSON

American Poetry.” It was in this course that my intrepid students taught me to accept the third person pronoun “they” as an existentially necessary, if not (yet) grammatically correct, usage.

The course I focus on here is a junior level colloquium I created on what I excitingly called “New Dickinson: After the Digital Turn.” In this seminar, we explore a renovated Dickinson emerging from the plethora of materialist, feminist, post-modernist, queer, and cultural studies approaches to her work. Most significantly, we consider the effects of readers’ access to the digital scans of her handwritten manuscripts and other online materials related to Dickinson – that is, the effects of experiencing Dickinson at her most intentional.

In this course, I strive to satisfy Freire’s call for “invention and re-invention” by letting go of my need to “cover” a certain number of texts and subjects. Rather, I encourage recursive discussions in which we come back to the same texts or questions to reexamine them patiently, restlessly, hopefully, and ever more deeply. I try to satisfy Freire’s call for “pursuing [knowledge] . . . with each other” by creating a community of inquiry through collaborative assignments. Because, as I tell my ambitious students (who loathe group projects as potentially reducing their individualist GPAs), we must learn to work together since in this world we all sink or swim together. As for “pursuing [knowledge] in and with the world,” I translate this as making our humanities knowledge and work public and accessible. It was this imperative that lead me to the 7th grade class of Steve Glazer at Crossroads Academy in Lyme, NH.

Steve is a gifted teacher who has crafted an extraordinary month-long unit on Emily Dickinson that culminates with a bus trip to Amherst, MA on December 10th – Dickinson’s birthday. His students recite a surprising number of poems they have learned by heart in The Homestead’s parlor, listen to a classmate’s original piano composition based

on a Dickinson poem played in The Evergreen’s front room, visit Amherst College’s Special Collections to view Dickinson’s manuscripts, and end the day by singing “This is my letter to the world” at the poet’s gravesite. I detail this unforgettable trip as well as outline Steve’s inventive syllabus and give examples of his students’ work in two posts on my digital project, *White Heat: Emily Dickinson in 1862*, a weekly blog for December 3-9 and 17-23. (URL in headnote: Please feel free to borrow and adapt from this syllabus whatever might work for your classes.)

To fulfill their inquiry in and with the world, my Dartmouth students prepare short presentations introducing the 7th graders to digital Dickinson resources, such as *EDA*, *Dickinson Electronic Archive*, *Dickinson’s Lexicon* and the Emily Dickinson Museum website, which hosts several helpful virtual tours. Pre-pandemic, I would ask: How many middle school or high school teachers in your area would appreciate a visit from college students studying Dickinson, who want to share what they have learned? Let’s hope the practice of sharing our knowledge and bridging between schools and colleges can become a possibility again in the near future. Despite the pandemic, we know that concepts, ideas, techniques, even resources become clearer when we have to explain them to others, especially to a group of inquisitive middle schoolers. These young



Photo Credit: Julia Viazmenski

Ivy Schweitzer (lower right) with Steve Glazer (lower left) and his class, singing “This is my letter to the World,” to the tune of “Amazing Grace” at the Dickinson family plot. One student in front is holding her final project on ED with a poetic analysis on the cover; another girl in the back holds a portrait she drew.

students may be digital natives and may know about Dickinson’s “fascicles” and “variants” from Steve’s terrific syllabus, but they haven’t heard of a fair copy or an authoritative edition.

A memorable “click” moment around Freire’s core notion of inquiry occurred in the Crossroads classroom as we compared digital scans of Dickinson’s handwritten texts to the versions in edited collections. We asked the Crossroads students, “When is a poem finished? Who decides?” They talked about their own poetry writing and how *they* decide if their poem is “done” and ready for the world. We followed up with, “How can this form of personal agency be applied to Dickinson? Why does a 20th century editor get to decide for her?” Looking more closely at her manuscripts, we asked about Dickinson’s inclusion of variant words and phrases, which students could clearly see on the computer screen, but which editors of her poetry leave out or relegate to an appendix. These questions piqued their imaginations, and they began questioning the whole concept of a poem ever being “finished.” How could it

TEACHING DICKINSON

be, they reasoned, if there are always different words and combinations to factor in?

Then, I introduced Sharon Cameron's critical notion of "choosing not choosing." Silence. After a long pause, a young boy piped up: "So, she didn't choose." A beat, then two. "No," I replied, "she made a choice, but what she chose was not to choose, to leave the decision open, leave it up to us, her readers." Another silence so thick and resonant that, later, Steve and I agreed we could hear the wheels of their twelve-year old minds churning furiously. These moments of group processing are so important, it's a shame to interrupt them. And so, we let the silence grow. Finally, another student exclaimed, "yes, I get it now," and the whole class broke into a flurry of excited chatter. Engaging in what Freire calls "dialogue," a synthesis of action and reflection that begins with love and ends with critical thinking (see *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Chapter 3), these young scholars began to comprehend Dickinson's poems, in Marta Werner's words from *Emily Dickinson's Open Folios*, "not as still points of meaning or as incorruptible texts but, rather, as events and phenomena of freedom."

In Spring 2020, I taught a version of "New Dickinson" as a First Year Writing seminar for the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program at Dartmouth. While the course had to be offered online because of the lockdown, the transition was relatively easy, because so many of the texts assigned for the course were already digital, such as the *White Heat* blog, which formed the foundation of the reading. Sadly, the rush to a remote platform prevented our plan to have Steve's 7th graders visit what they called our "college" classroom to introduce Dickinson to my first year students. This technique of learners becoming teachers, especially when one group imparts knowledge to those structurally more powerful, is another method of democratizing a platform inspired by Freire's work.

As an introduction to the field of WGSS, this course highlighted three aspects of

Dickinson's work: her self-publication; her engagement with gender issues in a 19th century context; her queerness and gender play in terms of contemporary theories. The *White Heat* blog offers several posts that introduce Dickinson and her poetry (see especially the post on Meter) and explore these three aspects of her world and work. Most daringly, we dispensed with a hard copy of Dickinson's poems altogether and, as a result, spent a good deal of fruitful time working with scans of her handwritten poems and debating the value of different versions, inclusion of variants, and the imposition of editors. The short comments on poems in the Poems section of *White Heat* indicate important features and summarize a range of critical approaches and interpretations that leave room for readers to fashion their own readings of poems.

A more specific way I use *White Heat* posts allows me to tailor class sessions to students' needs, thereby allowing them to basically design the session's contents. (For a more detailed explanation and description of this method, see Thomas Luxon, "Apprenticeship in Learning Design for Literature Courses," (2016) *Dartmouth Faculty Open Access Articles*. <http://digitalcommons.dartmouth.edu/facoa/58>). The night before each class in which a blog post and, thus, poems, are assigned, I ask students to submit, on the class Canvas site, a short reading response. The prompt asks them to choose a passage (from the poems, letters, or criticism) that they find confusing, troubling or striking, quote it with the proper citation form (this gives them lots of practice) and write a short explanation of their choice, focusing on how the biographical or historical contexts offered by the posts helps to illuminate the issues. Then, I read and organize the responses into groups for class discussion, which is focused on what students need and want to know about texts and how to read them, not what I want them to know. Without fail, students raise the crucial issues as well as some I had not thought of. This method has the added benefit of allowing me to "warm" call

students by asking them to read and amplify their written responses. Everyone contributes and, best of all, takes responsibility for the shared learning and teaching.

Early in the term, I introduced students to what I consider a core concept for feminist analysis, which I call "both/and." I have found that in the course of discussions, students often lock themselves into binary positions: in this course, it was a version of Dickinson was a _____ (fill in with recluse, lesbian, radical); no, Dickinson was _____ (fill in the opposites). When I proposed that we don't have to choose, that it's not a zero-sum game of winners and losers or right and wrong, they are stopped in their tracks. This is a way of thinking not offered to them, one they had not considered. I explain this practice as a counter to Descartes' cogito and the Western, masculinist opposition of mind and body, which elevates rational and logical thinking over the ability to embrace paradox and contradiction. I recommend Donna Haraway's key essay "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of a Partial Perspective" (*Feminist Studies* 1988). I invoke "intersectionality" (occupying different, even contradictory identities simultaneously), an idea most of them have heard of.

The both/and is also a crucial tool in my approach to Dickinson's poems. What I have learned from Freire's critical pedagogy, from lateral thinking, and from Dickinson herself, is the necessity of resisting our seemingly insatiable desire for logical narrative, for the either/or. Because if we don't find it, we impose it onto texts, even if, in the case of many of Dickinson's poems, they strenuously, even actively resist it. On this subject, consult Elizabeth Willis' cogent essay, "Dickinson's Species of Narrative" (*EDJ*, v18, n1, 2009), which derives its insights from a contextual reading of "This World is not conclusion." (Fr373) as a Darwinian evolutionary challenge to the stabilizing Judeo-Christian story of divine origins. Although Willis acknowledges that

TEACHING DICKINSON

“it’s tempting to treat the poem as a riddle we are meant to solve,” she proposes approaching it as offering “a variety of experience designed to push the reader’s consciousness to the brink of concepts that the poem itself makes no claim to understand.” In the world of lateral thinking, “understanding” means to stand under, not to be liberated from.

This is why, from the beginning of the course, I perplex my students by exhorting them NOT to search for the meaning of poems, for their “message,” as they call it, which they have been taught to do. “Getting” that “message” has been their measure of success, for which they have been rewarded all through their schooling. But once you “get it,” you can declare the process of searching, and, thus, learning, completed. A satisfied inertia sets in. Rather, I charge my students to observe closely and analyze how the poems make their meanings or actively refuse or confuse meaning and why. That is, before jumping to interpretation, explore what and how the poems induce them as readers to feel or see or wonder about.

And, yet, even the quickest fall back into these old habits of mind. Take this example, by one of the brightest students in the class, from the first assignment I give asking students to do a close reading of a poem of their choice. Since the course is also a writing seminar, I encourage good writing habits. And so, at the end of the first paragraph of her essay on “I died for Beauty” (Fr448), the student formulates the following thesis sentence:

“Enhanced by the poem’s technical components, the ultimate message seems to be that a cause’s success is not linear and hinges on whether ‘Beauty’ and ‘Truth’ unite.”

Examining the formal components of the poem, the students apprehend that they impart a lesson about non-linearity and embracing opposites (the both/and). How else to interpret that startling phrase at the very center of the poem: “Themselves are One”? Surprisingly, given this thesis, the student

does not quote this line or cite other images and strangely positioned dashes that prevent a linear reading of the poem and its imagery. Rather, she gets caught up in crafting a narrative for the poem (which her thesis implies is about circularity and paradox or anti-narrative) and ignores how imagery and punctuation produce effects of non-linearity and paradox. This is a classic mistake of young scholars doing close readings; they get so caught up in the details, they do not step back to see what their readings have actually discovered. In this case, this misstep is aggravated, I think, by the student’s need to construct a productive “message,” to make sense of a scenario that is about failing to choose and the literally eternal debate about the choice. But we don’t have a language for the productiveness of failure, for the richness of indeterminacy, or how to incorporate these into a narrative of so-called success.

This leaves me questioning: How to release students from the tyranny of logic, of narrative, of “making sense” in conventional ways? The stakes are high, for as Dickinson realized all those years ago, “Demur” from the “Majority” and “you’re straightway dangerous – / And handled with a Chain” (Fr620). That is why bell hooks describes her feminist approach, derived from Freire, as “teaching to transgress.” How can we give our students permission to transgress what they have been taught? To stand by and watch as poems articulate or perform their own form of il/logic? How can we persuade them that a proliferation of possible meanings, even ones that contradict each other, is a richer, more imaginative, more liberated means of measuring “success”?

My last example proposes one rather simple way out of the above dilemma, especially when it comes to reading Dickinson’s particularly narrative-resistant poetry. One of my students, who had participated in the very first iteration of “New Dickinson,” wrote an honors thesis titled “‘A dizzy music’: Temporal Loops in Emily Dickinson’s Fascicle 18.” This study grew out of a close reading

from the Junior Colloquium of “I know that He exists” (Fr365) and blossomed, by way of readings in Sharon Cameron and Alexandra Socarides on Dickinson’s fascicles, into a breathtaking exploration of the textual landscape of the signifier “Bliss” across Fascicle 18. And don’t just take my word for its achievement. EDIS selected a chapter of this thesis as Best Undergraduate Student Essay in 2018.

Having already endured a term of my radical unlearning approach to poetry, this student was prepped. And though it took her months to figure out how to work with Fascicle 18, I can now recognize the marks of Freire’s injunctions about “invention and re-invention,” the dialectical movement between action and reflection, the “restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry.” This student contributed to the critical conversation on Dickinson by identifying what she called “contextual word variants,” by which she means not the usual variant for a word or phrase that Cameron works with, but the same word itself changing its meaning given its use and position in the twenty or so poems in a fascicle. In tracing these multi-dimensional networks, she demonstrated how these thematic word groups, while sharing certain meanings, also appear to be telling diverging and often contradictory stories, endorsed by the poet.

Reading the fascicles as aesthetic units liberates readers from the narrowness of interpreting a single poem. The kind of lateral thinking I want to encourage in students happens when they begin to read the poems not as single closed fixed entities unrelated to other poems or texts. Lateral reading reduces the pressure to produce or induce a logical narrative from a lyric expression. Rather, reading the poems and their structures, diction, imagery and themes in the order and relation in which their author set them, allows us to watch them converse with the poems before and after them. It allows us to apprehend the dizzying music of multiplicity and infinite possibilities.

POET TO POET

Series Editor, Jonnie Guerra

I am pleased to introduce Bulletin readers to Kristen Tracy, whose wonderful essay is the final installment of the Poet to Poet series under my editorship. Tracy won the 2017 Emily Dickinson First Book Award from the Poetry Foundation for Half-Hazard, and its title poem is reprinted here along with the entertaining story of its origin. Tracy's poems have been widely published including in the Southern Review, Threepenny Review, Prairie Schooner, and Poetry Magazine. Also a prolific writer for young audiences, she has a board book series about a bear and a fox coming out with Chronicle Books this year. At various times in her life, Tracy has been a college professor, a high school teacher, and an aerobics instructor. She shares Dickinson's interest in plants and gardening and spent several years volunteering as a gardener on Alcatraz helping to restore the historic gardens.

Out of Idaho

by Kristen Tracy

I grew up in a small Mormon town in Idaho, population 841, near Yellowstone Park, surrounded by cows, potato farms, and Libertarians. I didn't know much about poetry until my senior year of high school, when I had a teacher determined to introduce us to poetic meter and form. I took to it immediately. While I enjoyed this crash course in prosody, I enjoyed even more reading the poets and their biographies. At this time, I read all biographies as a potential roadmap out of the conservative Snake River Valley. When I read Emily Dickinson, I felt an immediate connection with her. From what I gathered by reading a short introduction of her life, she, like me, had been trapped somewhere. Of course she wrote about death and flowers and her light-sensitive eyes. I also understood exactly how it felt to exist in a place where you didn't neatly fit.

I looked to Dickinson as a mentor. I read her work very personally, as if she'd written her poems to liberate and light my own imagination. I loved her work, though at the time I didn't understand it was possible actually to be a living poet. My high school English class ended with Frost and Millay.



Photo Credit: Jordan Roberts

I wouldn't discover the depth of the ambition and talent that dwelt inside Emily Dickinson until much later. It would be another decade before I took an intensive Emily Dickinson course in graduate school while working on my PhD in Kalamazoo, Michigan, far from my Mormon starting grounds. While I took this course, I was working on writing my own collection of poems. They were bright lyrics, often braided with personal stories. Reading Dickinson, digging into her quick turns and bold assertions about

life, death, God, love, nature, and art, I studied my most influential mentor.

I learned quickly to trim the narrative impulses in my work, to take Dickinson's lead and allow the musicality of the line to sing and strike. There was a precision to her expression that taught me to tighten my own. I learned to wring my lines for the essential parts, and Dickinson's verse taught me quite a bit about what was essential. Midway through graduate school I worried that many of the poets I knew in real life were unhappy people. Should this matter? Perhaps I should have tried to meet different poets. Instead, I shifted my career, and began writing for a younger audience. At first, I wrote middle-grade novels. Then I realized there were stories I wanted to write for teenagers. The world needed a funny losing-your-virginity story, I decided. So I wrote *Lost It*, about a girl who loses her virginity underneath a canoe near my hometown. I wrote and wrote and wrote. Over the next ten years, I published over a dozen books with Random House, Disney-Hyperion, and Simon & Schuster.

While writing these novels for a younger audience did take me away from writing my own poetry, it did not take me away from Emily Dickinson. I hunted for ways to include her in my books. In my second middle-grade novel, *The Reinvention of Bessica Lefter*, my main character struggles to adapt to middle school without close friends. A teacher tasks her with memorizing a poem; she chooses "I'm nobody! Who are you?" (Fr260). I saw my chance to introduce young readers to my mentor and hoped they would fall in love with her the way I had. I imagined curious youngsters stirred by her magic, sincerity, and sense of play. I hoped after reading my books, they would want to devour her entire *oeuvre*. She'd unlocked so much joy for me. Why not share her?

Even as I embarked on this new career, I missed poetry. I continued to read living poets and regularly attended conferences and retreats. I had a bucket list of poets I wanted to meet, and if possible, study with: Claudia Rankine, Jack Gilbert, Joy Harjo, Robert Hass, Sharon Olds, Billy Collins, and Stephen Dunn among them. During these years of

POET TO POET

seeking out poets, I was also lucky enough to meet Gwendolyn Brooks and Allen Ginsberg and also to become short-lived pen pals with Seamus Heaney. I cut a deal with myself that I had to do four things a year that made me feel like a poet. So I continued to seek out connections, guidance, and even friends. And most importantly, I also continued to write poems. Because I'd been able to walk away from my conservative upbringing, give up friends, endure strained relationships with family, and hadn't felt much regret, I realized poetry was anchored in me in a different way, a way that I had not truly acknowledged.

At some point, I realized that I felt like an imposter attending events for poets. While I'd published many poems individually, I didn't have a book of poems. The distinction between having a book and not having a book in the world of poetry is immense. My contacts in the world of children's publishing could not help me publish a book of poems. My imposter syndrome grew. I felt like a failure. Friends thought I was irrational. I'd been a finalist and semifinalist for many prizes, including the Walt Whitman Award and the Yale Younger Poet Prize. I'd met and studied with every poet on my bucket list except Joy Harjo. But I'd been writing and publishing poems for twenty years and never won a book prize. An ex-boyfriend from graduate school had once offered me sharp advice that tumbled through me every time I received a rejection: Frost was the last good poet. The world doesn't need more poems.

I continued to send out my manuscript. One day while dropping my son off at preschool I saw I had a missed call from Chicago. My heart leapt. What if it was the Poetry Foundation? I knew that was based in Chicago. I'd applied to the Emily Dickinson First Book Award but I hadn't expected to hear anything for weeks. I called the number back. I can't explain the pure joy that burst through me as Stephen Young told me my manuscript had been chosen as the winner. Twenty years of work was about to be turned into a book. My publisher would be Graywolf Press. What else could I want? It turns out there would be a ceremony at the Poetry Foundation in Chicago. I'd be there along with winners of other awards, including Joy Harjo, the Ruth Lily Poetry Prize winner.

I bought a dress, my husband and young son and I flew to Chicago, and we attended the Pegasus Awards. Before I read from my book, I was drenched with praise and awarded a medal. After I read from my poems, Joy approached and congratulated me. She would go on to blurb my book. I didn't know life could offer so many rewards. After the reading we mingled at a nice reception. I was approached by Poetry Foundation board member and best-selling author Scott Turow, who congratulated me and said, "You're forever linked to Emily Dickinson. How does that feel?" Is there even a word? I can't think of a better outcome in life than existing alongside my mentor in every biographical note that will ever be written about me. I have new momentum and feel packed with ideas. I started out life in a town that valued beef cattle, potatoes, and the patriarchy. With Dickinson's help, I've ended up in a far better place.

The idea for the title poem, "Half-Hazard," came to me in the middle of a waitressing shift at an Italian restaurant in Montpelier, Vermont. At this point, I had an MA and an MFA, but worked as a waitress so I could carve out more time to write. As I readied a check for a table I began to think about what I'd do after work and I realized: I'm never going into outer space. I felt real grief over this. I lived in a way to keep my options open, but looking at how things stood, it was clear that I would never leave Earth. I wondered where, precisely, had I closed the door? I turned it over in my mind until I landed on the problem. Nobody had ever sent a woman to the moon. I lacked role models. So I wrote a poem to reckon with this catastrophe, and decided it should be a villanelle.

Half-Hazard

They can put a girl on the moon right now, I suppose.
The details wouldn't be too hard to crack.
Dangers here. Perils there. It'll go how it goes.

Earth faces venoms, disease, foes and woes.
Free of that jeopardy she won't rocket back.
If you put the right girl on the moon, I suppose.

Some might worry alone she'll face lunar lows.
Does a girl who lacks parties turn blue in pitch black?
Dangers here. Perils there. It'll go how it goes.

Like Buzz, Neil, and Gene, and above-average joes
she'll travel in space boots and wield a screw jack.
If we put our best girl on the moon, I suppose.

We'll blast her above every bloom of dog rose.
Let her farewell our bright spots along with our wrack.
Dangers here. Perils there. Who will own how this goes?

Prepared for the darkness and cut off from schmoes.
Whole girl. Half-hazard. On a zodiac track.
We'll put that girl right on the moon, I suppose.
Endangered. Imperiled. And watch how it goes.

(first published in the *New Yorker*)

Credit: Kristen Tracy, "Half-Hazard" from *Half-Hazard: Poems*. Copyright © 2018 by Kristen Tracy. Reprinted with the permission of The Permissions Company, LLC on behalf of Graywolf Press, Minneapolis, Minnesota, graywolfpress.org

The Spring 2020 issue of the Bulletin included a reprint of a 1991 essay from the Heath, Massachusetts, Herald about one-time local resident, Josiah Gilbert Holland. The essay, which presented Dr. Holland in somewhat unflattering terms (it was titled “The Prig from Dell”), included the putatively risible information that Holland’s “greatest enthusiasm was reserved for an English novelist named George MacDonald, who now resides in the same literary oblivion as Holland himself.” EDIS member Anne Ramirez offers this article about Macdonald as a corrective. Ramirez recently retired from leadership of the English program at Neumann University, where she still teaches part-time. She studied under the late Dr. Karen Dandurand, and has published three academic articles on Dickinson, as well as over forty other articles and reviews in academic and specialty publications. She has given five presentations at EDIS gatherings.

Subversive Spirits: Common Threads in George MacDonald and Emily Dickinson

By Anne Ramirez

Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

John 20:29

Seeing is not believing – it is only seeing –
George MacDonald,
The Princess and the Goblin, Ch. XXII

I see thee better – in the Dark –
I do not need a Light –
The Love of Thee – a Prism be –
Excelling Violet –

Fr442

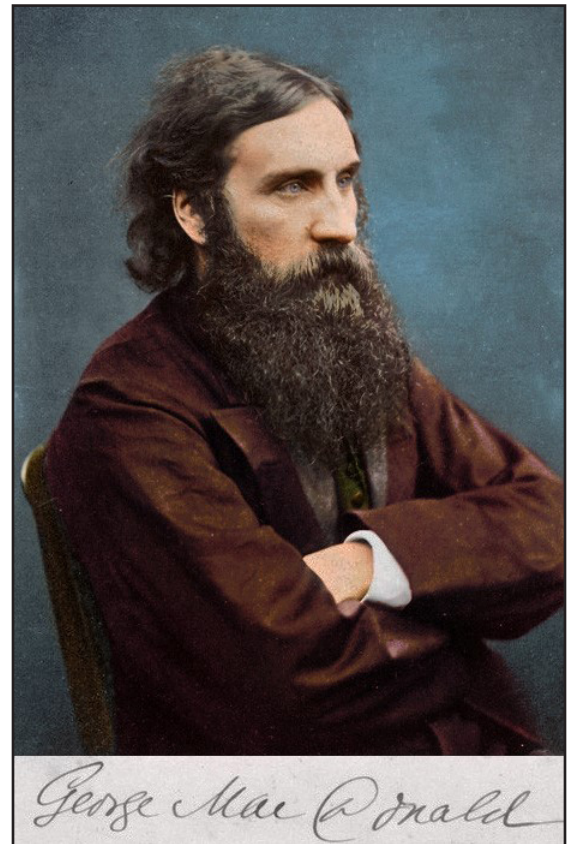
It is an intriguing possibility that Emily Dickinson knew and appreciated the writings of her unconventional contemporary George MacDonald. A Scottish clergyman, lecturer, and prolific writer of theological essays, poetry, and fiction, Macdonald became an acknowledged influence on C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, L. Frank Baum, Madeleine L’Engle, and Neil Gaiman. Recombining traditional motifs to communicate his distinctive vision of the invisible, he harmonized Romanticism, Christianity, and feminism as few writers had yet done. Macdonald’s chief claim to fame now rests on three symbolic fantasies ostensibly for children, of which *The Princess and the Goblin* is arguably the finest. In the two *Princess* fantasies, MacDonalld conveys remarkably subversive themes through his portrait of a supernatural female figure who

guides a young girl and boy toward maturity.

If Dickinson in fact learned of MacDonald’s writings through their mutual friends, she could have found precisely the kind of reassurance her poems repeatedly long for and sometimes manage to express, from someone else equally familiar with such doctrines as predestination, election, and the substitutionary theory of salvation. Macdonald’s vision of an all-loving and androgynous God might well have appealed to Dickinson, who wrestled with her received image of the Divine Being as a stern Puritan father: “If God would make a visit – / Or only take a Nap – / So not to see us –” (Fr437). In their very different genres, these two nineteenth-century writers re-fashioned the conclusions of their similar interior struggles into threads leading out of goblin-haunted caverns into the light of day.

MacDonald was born in rural Aberdeenshire on December 10, 1824 – exactly six years to the day before Dickinson – and in much the same religious tradition. Like Robert Burns and D. H. Lawrence, who also sprang from the laboring class, MacDonald contrived to get a good education, yet re-

mained strongly influenced by his Calvinist childhood roots. Meanwhile he absorbed the popular lore of the Scottish countryside, and went on to study German Romanticism and folklore, as well as medicine and theology. He was also influenced by the English Romantic



poets, particularly Blake, and became close friends with Lewis Carroll, author of the *Alice* fantasies.

Although MacDonald was ordained in the English Congregational Church, he held a pastorate for only three years. His conservative parishioners respected him but were disturbed by his unconventional views – ranging from the hope that animals might enter heaven to the belief that clothes given to the poor should still be in decent condition. While suffering from chronic ill health, he thereafter supported his wife and eleven children through writing, guest preaching, and lecturing.

The Princess and the Goblin was published in America as well as England in 1872, (when Emily Dickinson's niece Mattie would have been of an age to enjoy it with a child's understanding). That same year, MacDonald came to the United States to lecture on Burns and Shakespeare in several East Coast cities – staying on three separate occasions in the home of Dickinson's friends Josiah and Elizabeth Holland (Raeper). Dr. Holland, a great admirer of MacDonald, was then editor of *Scribner's Monthly Magazine*, where the Scottish writer's *Wilfrid Cumbermede* had recently been serialized (Shaberman). Even though MacDonald's name does not appear in the extant correspondence, the Hollands might well have mentioned their literary guest to Emily Dickinson.

During his American tour, Macdonald met Emerson, Whitman, Whittier, Holmes, and Stowe, and made friends with Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain), who also had a Calvinist upbringing, and whose daughters delighted in MacDonald's fantasies. Perhaps MacDonald served to illustrate not only that the fears, doubts, and struggles for peace of mind that often beset Twain (and Dickinson) are relatively normal for a sensitive person of their cultural heritage, but also that they can be alleviated through thought and study.

Conversely, MacDonald would surely have been intrigued if the Hollands told him of the reclusive yet affectionate friend who spun her

“Yarn of Pearl” in her upper room and enclosed the results in letters – a living echo of his fictional lady of the tower. In *The Princess and the Goblin*, the Princess Irene discovers an old staircase leading to the secret tower rooms of her great-great-grandmother, who becomes her guide and refuge. One evening the princess and her nurse lose their way home and are assisted by the young miner Curdie, whose courage and quick wits help him drive away the troublesome goblins of the region by improvising and singing songs – something the evil creatures cannot abide. How Dickinson would have enjoyed this tribute to the power of verse! One recalls her letter to Higginson, “I sing, as the Boy does by the Burying Ground – because I am afraid –” (L261).

Dickinson's own references to goblins are quite as sinister as MacDonald's, often with sexual overtones, as in “The Soul has Banded moments –,” in which the speaker “feels some ghastly Fright come up / And stop to look at her – / Salute her with long fingers – / Caress her freezing hair –” (Fr360). In the novel, Curdie is captured and imprisoned by the goblins while spying on their plans to kidnap the princess as a bride for their prince. However, Irene's grandmother has spun a magic thread for the child, telling her to follow it whenever she feels it with her finger, until it leads her back to the grandmother's tower. Accordingly, the courageous princess finds her way into the caverns and rescues the astonished Curdie, thereby enabling him to warn her people and lead them in defending the kingdom when the goblins do invade. Some of Dickinson's lines resonate uncannily with Irene's confident attitude: “I see thee better – in the Dark – I do not need a Light –.” Curdie eventually feels the thread with his finger as well, a tactile metaphor analogous

to Thoreau's reference to hearing a different drummer – and Dickinson's “Better than Music” in which she celebrates a “different . . . melody” that she is dedicated to “Humming – until my faint Rehearsal – / Drop into tune – around the Throne –” (Fr378).

Thus, one of MacDonald's most striking contributions to Victorian literature is his thoroughly androgynous vision of heroism. In the sequel, *The Princess and Curdie* (1882), Irene regrettably plays a reduced role, but the grandmother is even more prominent, as she sends Curdie (now several years older) on a challenging mission to save the king's health, household, and capital city from internal corruption and greed. The lady of the tower disguises herself as a housemaid, the only servant at court willing to assist Curdie. In the final apocalyptic struggle, her hosts of white pigeons descend to hasten the defeat of



Frontispiece to *The Princess and the Goblin* (1872), by Charles Folkard.

the king's enemies. Afterwards a great feast is held, at which she serves all the company with her own hands.

Feminist critics might see Macdonald's lady of the tower as a unique variant of the "madwoman in the attic"; Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar discuss Emily Dickinson herself as the culmination of this tradition embodied in the characters of other women writers – and choose the epigraph for their influential study from George MacDonald's *Lilith*. Like MacDonald, Dickinson uses the motif of spinning as an emblem of a woman's power: "The Spider as an Artist / Has never been employed –" (Fr1373); and in another poem, the spider unwinds its "Yarn of Pearl" from its "Silver Ball" (Fr513), much like the one Irene receives from her grandmother. Even though many of the particular poems mentioned herein were written prior to Macdonald's fantasies, there are nonetheless striking affinities between these two writers in their imaginative re-purposing of similar cultural imagery.

The figure of the grandmother is clearly the supreme being in her fictional universe. She is both model and guide, never implying that she is answerable to any greater masculine entity. A lengthy article could be devoted to the biblical and theological allusions associated with her. She can manifest herself in many forms, but the ability to see her (or feel her thread) depends on the character of the beholder. Apparently omnipotent and omniscient, she rarely intervenes directly in human events. If a reader wonders why she does not simply eradicate the goblins by magic, MacDonald offers no more answers than Job received to similar questions.

What makes MacDonald's fantasies so profoundly subversive is that the grandmother's gender is never defended, explained, or presented as a hindrance to finding, seeing, or believing in her. It is simply taken for granted, not needing justification. Thus, MacDonald's young readers would not know that such female images of the divine were particularly unusual if no adult were at pains to tell them so. When I first began the systematic pursuit of

women's studies and found numerous scholars of Jewish and Catholic heritage deploring the total absence of feminine images of the divine in Western culture, it dawned upon me they would not have grown up as I did, rereading the Princess fantasies until the pages came loose from the binding. Fortunately, by 1993, the Jewish scholar Gerda Lerner published *The Creation of Feminist Consciousness*, in which she traces the subversive feminist tradition running throughout Western culture from the third century to the late 1800's. After devoting a full ten pages to Emily Dickinson, Lerner eloquently concludes,

By choice, she had moved her life into metaphor. . . . Her feat was subversive, in the best tradition of women's resistance to patriarchy. . . . She found a way out of the conditions her life presented to her, and in so doing she dismantled the cage of restraints which patriarchal definitions had placed on women of talent. She transformed "the house of her father," which she never physically left and to whose rules she so ostentatiously submitted, into a free temple of ungendered humanity, where the soul stood naked and unencumbered, open at last to all possibilities.

Lerner repeatedly emphasizes that feminist consciousness and scholarship kept arising independently with limited impact until the nineteenth century because so few women previously had the chance to discover the contributions of women before them. Extending this observation into more recent years, it appears that Virginia Woolf never read Emily Dickinson – and Lerner herself never cites Gilbert and Gubar's study, written fourteen years earlier – yet somehow I had the good fortune to read all four. Long before reading Elizabeth Petrino's superb analysis of literary echoes in Dickinson's art, not always attributable to conscious intention, I had been tracing similar echoes or parallels between Dickinson and other writers who "Sang / To keep the Dark away" within a subversive feminist tradition. George MacDonald is one such writer.

The possibility that Emily Dickinson's later life and art may have been directly enriched

by George MacDonald's works (or even vice versa?) merits further historical investigation, but even if there were no direct influence, the affinities between these two subversive spirits are only the more remarkable. The echoes resonating between Dickinson and MacDonald could be as coincidental as their shared birthdays, but they are nonetheless significant inasmuch as they support our image of Dickinson as a comparatively normal gifted individual within the literary and sociological context of her era, rather than as the morbidly depressed wraith still circulating in popular stereotype. Despite the dominance of Victorian patriarchy, MacDonald envisioned the grandmother sitting in her hidden tower spinning threads for those who seek and find her, even as Emily Dickinson sat in her upper room spinning her "Yarn of Pearl" (Fr513) into her "Letter[s] to the World" (Fr519). Both contributed strands to the thread of feminist consciousness in creative literature.

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WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

The Bulletin is grateful to Diana Wagner for her editorship of the *What's Your Story?* series, which has long served to introduce readers to artists, musicians, and many other Dickinson readers with a unique story to tell about their exposure to the poet's work. Please contact the editor, Dan Manheim (dan.manheim@centre.edu) to suggest subjects for the series or to propose a new series editor.

Far More Than “Ten Pivotal Moments” in the Making of Martha Ackmann

By Eleanor Heginbotham

In this year of COVID terrors and fevered politics Martha Ackmann has produced a lively, sane picture of Dickinson's life that reviewers praise – “Radiant prose, palpable descriptions, and deep empathy for the poet's sensibility make this biography extraordinary” (*Kirkus* starred review); Ackmann offers “those small, insignificant moments that suddenly blossom into wide, disturbing vistas of significance” (*Washington Post*); “this vivid, affectionate chronicle” of “a complex and warm-blooded individual” (*The New Yorker*); and more. She laughs at the timeliness of her title, one chosen from nine possibilities: *These Fevered Days: Ten Pivotal Moments in The Making of Emily Dickinson*. What moments go into the making of a book distinguished for its scholarship and for its page-turning-interest accessibility?

Here are a few in the life of Ackmann, whose thirty years as a professor at Mount Holyoke; leadership of EDIS (past president and organizer of two of its conferences); and co-founder (with Joanna Dobson and the late Karen Dandurand) of *Legacy*, have helped to shape the Dickinson community. The recipient of a Guggenheim and a Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study fellowship, Ackmann's writing on Dickinson has appeared in *The Atlantic*, *The Paris Review*, and *LitHub*.

For this conversation we'll leave out Ackmann's moments in her other worlds – books on women of achievement in space flight and baseball (the latter transformed to a hit play); her early years as a high school teacher and journalism advisor, which resulted in



inspiring at least one future Pulitzer award winner; her current essay on “ghost inheritances” (about the influence of the grandmother whom she did not know in life) and a new book on the horizon about Dolly Parton. Focus for now on her Emily Dickinson moments, culminating in *Fevered Days*.

As a child, Martha reports, she hid in the forsythia bushes of her Missouri home to read. Her father, a cartographer, and her mother, a nurse, did not encourage the luxury of time spent with books, but her surreptitious habit prepared her for the “pivotal moment” when the 16-year-old met Emily Dickinson in Mrs. Brandon's English class and “woke up.” At the time, she says, she “couldn't explain a single line” of Mrs. Brandon's choice for the class, “After great pain.” but here's the thing:

“I understood it.” One dramatic example of how “the poem has continued to follow me throughout my life” involved a tragic drowning of a beloved professor while saving some young kids at a river near Middlebury's Bread Loaf, where Martha worked on her MA. At the service, when the poem was read, the exactness of the final line, “First – Chill – then Stupor – then the letting go” overwhelmed her.

An almost literal “pivotal” moment happened one evening during her Ph.D. studies at the University of Massachusetts. How she nearly tripped over something on the day she met Mary Hampson at the Evergreens (readers of the *Bulletin* know about Hampson's tenancy of Austin's home) is quite a story: the “old woman came tottering out” and sensed the interest of the intern / docent who was walking slowly past the house en-route home. “What have you read and what do you know?” she asked Martha, who was canny enough in her answer to be invited in to see the house. “It smelled old – still smelled of kerosene,” remembers Martha. Between the disheveled parlor (newspapers from 1890 mingled with those from 1965) and the kitchen Martha tripped: Mary Hampson said, “That's Edward's brief case.” And this will take your breath away: Martha says there was a train ticket still attached, perhaps from the last ride of Edward Dickinson's life.

No wonder Mount Holyoke students in the gender studies and literature classes she taught for 30 years loved their professor. She told great stories, as she does in her

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

biographies, and she ended Dickinson semesters – semesters in which students were encouraged to research in primary, hitherto uninvestigated materials – by inviting them, two at a time, to climb up to the Homestead's cupola. Invariably, she reports, they were silent as they looked through the window as Dickinson had. *Fevered Days* is the culmination of those years and of her own particular interests.

One such interest was the quixotic meteorologist of Amherst, Ebenezer Snell, whose weather reports for most of the “ten pivotal moments,” which serve as entries to a thorough, fact-driven account of most of Dickinson's life. She opens the book with Snell; even the footnote about him brings a smile. Snell's daughter Sabra picks up the job after Snell's death, prompting a touching reflection on the loss of fathers from Emily. The book ends with a lovely account of the weather on the May day: “It was a beautiful day. Buttercups and violets dotted the grass. At the backdoor of the Homestead . . . a half dozen workmen lifted Emily's coffin. Then the quiet procession headed out past the barn, across the fields, and into the light.” The weather reports are more than a device: they remind the reader of the real woman, herself a connoisseur and reporter of winds and snows and rain, in an actual world, freed from the legends and literary jargon that have sprung up around her.

Ackmann's familiarity with the Amherst terrain and her relish for research allow us to feel the sticky stuff that made taffy into parties for young people, to see “the Chinese laundry and the oysters and the livery stable” Higginson walked by from his visit to the Dickinsons, to hear the choir practicing as Dickinson lay dying. Such precision anchors Dickinson in her time and place, but Ackmann's goal is transcendent: in digging into the life of Dickinson – as she did into the Mercury 13 women and Toni Stone, the first woman to play professional baseball in the Negro League – Ackmann wants to see “What is America.” Her goal is high; “I want-

ed to learn about the source of Dickinson's staggering imagination, where did it come from? How could a recluse see so far?” That's what she told Madeleine Blaise (*The National Book Review*); for this interview destined for *Bulletin* readers who already know much about Dickinson herself, Ackmann narrowed the focus of the conversation from that broad goal to the interaction Dickinson had with three characters whom Ackmann sees underrated or misunderstood by many previous biographers.

First, Helen Hunt Jackson. “When I stepped back and thought about” the depiction of the relationship between the exact contemporaries, “I felt something was missing.” Often seen as a lopsided mutual admiration society, in which Jackson recognized the greater genius of Emily to such an extent that after pleading with her to publish, she took “Success is counted sweetest” for her anthology *A Masque of Poets*. Ackmann provides community context for Helen, introducing us to her writer-mother and depicting her childhood personality as so forceful that she could not remain in her first local school and tracing the development of the woman who would go on to fight fiercely in documentary writing and in the novel *Ramona* on behalf of exploited victims of injustice among Indians at the hands of the Spanish and American governments. Ackmann speaks passionately about Jackson's interest in publishing Emily Dickinson. “She held her own,” says Ackmann. “She pushed – ‘it is wrong to the day you live in, that you will not sing aloud’: that is putting it to her.” Dickinson clearly reciprocated the admiration – even awe – writing to Jackson's widower a letter elegy that rivals those about Gilbert to Sue: “Helen of Troy will die, but Helen of Colorado, never.”

Just so, Ackmann extols the famous figure who linked Jackson with Dickinson, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, whom she rescues from the notion that he never understood Dickinson. Ackmann traces the braided lives and publications of the trio (Jackson / Higginson / Dickinson, the first two being celeb-

rities already), coming down with generous sympathy for Higginson: “Not criticism but constancy; that is a mighty gift.” Ackmann is most forceful in talking of Mary Lyon, whose celebration of the intellectual possibilities of women still hovers over Mount Holyoke, “as thick as can be,” says Ackmann. “She was a formidable woman who said to her charges that women have a right to think.” To take on those who have decided that Dickinson left Mount Holyoke after one year because she could not witness to salvation as required, “to get away from the line that it was a stifling environment,” Ackmann says that she “did a math project.” How many completed the three-year program? The “math project,” proving that the majority of Dickinson's class left after one year, led her to the conclusion that “Dickinson was not the exception; she was the norm.”

Along with shedding the light of her own kindness and good sense on these three figures, Ackmann answers other problems in Dickinson biography with her knowledge and her common sense. Of romantic attachments, for example, about which recent movies have seemed convinced, Ackmann says, “To read metaphor as biography is very tricky.” Of Sue, she says, “no one knew her better or understood her better,” but in answer to the question of how much farther the relationship went or, in answer to a related question, who is her candidate for the “Master Letters,” Ackmann points out that, although she has a primary probable candidate, she doesn't name him in the book. These are “examples of a handful of unanswerable questions,” she says with care. One question, we agreed, does appear answerable: toward the end of her life and until his death, Emily Dickinson had a sweet if unconsummated love affair with her father's friend Judge Otis Lord. The letters, whether all were actually sent or not, reflect the love (and some sizzle) Dickinson had for “My lovely Salem” and “My Church” – and, though Martha doesn't

Continued on page 25

STUDIO SESSIONS

Series Editor, Barbara Dana

Robert McDowell reports that he “walks and talks with Emily Dickinson every day.” His collection Sweet Wolf: New and Selected Poems, and his novel, Emily & Virginia, will appear in the Spring of 2021. In the latter, Emily Dickinson, Virginia Woolf, and others return to this world to protect and assist a young woman artist.

I Ask an Old Question of Emily Dickinson in Her Bedroom

By Robert McDowell

When I was young, I felt rather contrary around other devotees of Emily Dickinson. She was, after all, my poet. Hadn't she gifted me with so many fever dreams I was convinced we'd known each other in her lifetime, and wasn't she keeping company with me always, here, now? Hadn't she electrified me to my core when, all alone at her grave in deep winter, snow suddenly opened up and I plunged down to my waist as her excited laughter echoed off the tombstones?

It's a cliché, I know, yet I felt my heart in my throat. I felt panic and astonishment as I waited, waited, stuck there. As my mind settled, I thrilled to the powerful awakening sensation that Emily had somehow reached up through the snow, grabbed me by my boots and yanked me down to her. But only half-way; why did she stop? My soul streaked from doom to desire, an arc that has never flattened out, but has rather pulsed brighter with deeper, brighter colors as 40-plus years have piled up on both of us.

“Why did you stop!” I cried on that late winter graveyard eve.

Finally, reluctantly, I extricated myself from my snow trap, crawling out of the snow on hands and knees. Standing on rubbery legs, unwilling, I walked from the grave back to the town, not feeling at all in my body. I do not remember the

details of that night, but the next day I boarded a train to return to New York and my walk-up fourth floor studio on 105th Street between West End Avenue and Riverside Drive. I returned to another term at Columbia University's MFA Program where I was especially looking forward, on three separate occasions, to sitting at table with James Baldwin, Stephen Spender and the daughter of Ezra Pound.

They did not disappoint, though someone else, for me, shone brighter that year. I had also looked forward to working for a term with the Pulitzer Prize-winning poet, Richard Eberhart. Eberhart's warm, empathetic Presence was a tonic for students made weary by other younger teachers whose egos frequently overwhelmed whatever teaching skills they brought to our graduate school party. Eberhart's calm demeanor and passionate love of poetry made coming to workshop a joy. It was a peak mentor-apprentice relationship for me.

We hit it off so well that one day after class Dick surprised me by asking me to dinner in his rooms at the Chelsea Hotel. I was nervous and thrilled when I arrived and met Betty, his wife who was the feminine double of her husband. Both were gracious, affectionate and lively. They were so gracious and lively they almost glowed. They rather resembled Aos Sí – Irish and Scottish pixies.

I don't remember now what we ate or even talked about during the meal, though I'm sure we must have covered my background, the writing program and our workshop. I don't remember the details, but I vividly recall the conversation we had afterwards. Dick waved me to sit next to him on a couch while Betty settled into a wingback chair facing us. Dick said he'd heard from others that I loved Emily Dickinson and her poetry. Was it true? I said yes and told them about my experience at Emily's grave just a few weeks before. Dick's eyes really did twinkle when he smiled (so did Betty's) and they were smiling.

“Take my hand,” he said, extending his right hand. Nervously, I glanced at Betty, who encouraged me with a nod. I took his hand in mine. He gripped my hand tight and held it, holding it for such a long time I grew even more anxious. What was this about? Finally, he released me saying, “there, now you can always say that you held the hand that held the hand that held the hand of Emily Dickinson.” A jolt raced up and down my spine and I knew that what he said was true. Before I could ask, Dick explained.

“When I was a young man teaching at a prep school in New England,” he said, “I visited Amherst and met an old woman who in her youth had known Emily. She was one of the MacGregor children who played around the Homestead with Emi-

STUDIO SESSIONS

ly's niece and nephew. She was also one of the children who received the famous baskets full of baked goodies, especially gingerbread, lowered by rope from Emily's second-story window. On occasion, she walked hand-in-hand with Emily as the poet pointed out botanical wonders in her garden. 'So,' she told me, 'now you've held the hand that held the hand of Emily Dickinson!' I'm passing the transmission on to you."

I gulped air. I thought I might cry as I thanked Dick over and over. I hugged him; I hugged Betty. I might have even danced around the room. I'm not sure how I left or got back to my apartment, but it's likely my feet never touched the ground. I felt giddy for days and I think it was a week before I washed my right hand again. Finally, I did so, reluctantly, yet I felt it was ok because the molecules and atoms from Emily's hand had by then been absorbed and mixed with my own.

Forty-four years later I was back in Amherst for a week of immersion in all things Emily. It was July, it was hot and green and buzzing, and Emily's Presence accompanied me everywhere. More than once a nearby stranger paused to gaze quizzically at me; I had been caught speaking out loud to the Poet. I felt her beside me as we wandered around both of the town cemeteries, retraced her girlhood steps to and from the site of Amherst Academy, now represented only by a plaque, and lingered at the site of the long-gone family home on North Pleas-



Photo Credit: Arielle Verway

ant Street, which overlooked the graveyard and is now a gas station (impressively, even the teenage boy who filled my rental car's tank knew that the poet had lived there). We prowled the bookstores, sat in coffee shops and restaurants and spent many hours in and around the Homestead, taking tours, chatting up the guides and docents and enjoying coffee with Jane Wald, the Museum's generous and gracious director. Finally, as had been prearranged, I spent an hour – Alone – in Emily's bedroom.

I arrived at 5:30 on July 26th, standing stock-still just a few feet inside the

doorway. Unmoving, I breathed in and savored the air, recognizing instantly the Poet's presence there, too; Emily announced herself.

Slowly, skillfully, I looked around the room, admiring the reconstructed wallpaper and paint, noting each object, yes, with reverence. To my left the bed, her bed, the bed she slept in and died in, and on it, one of her favorite shawls. I wanted to reach down and touch it; I got close, but I resisted. Instead, I held my open palm over it and felt much as I do when I hold my hands out to a tree. I felt pulsating energy emanating up from the shawl, her energy. I don't know how long I stood there before moving, yet when I did I was conscious of moving slowly, carefully.

I imagined her writing, yet she would not be writing if she were there and I were there. She would want to play. She would want to

laugh, the writing saved for later. This Hour is Communion, she said. So, I shared the fact (she already knew it) that on July 26th, 1745, twenty-two women played in the first recorded women's cricket match in England. They were dressed all in white. Emily recited these lines:

My white dress
Becomes me
As I become
Worthy – wearing it

There's never been anything standoffish about Emily, not in my experience.

STUDIO SESSIONS

I moved with reverence, absorbing the buttery light and gazing out the four windows. It was no trouble imagining sheep grazing on the Dickinson meadow across Main Street, though clusters of buildings have replaced grass and sheep. I wondered if she'd ever perched on the windowsills and there she was, like witchcraft, hooting with pleasure like a bird.

I felt fluid seeing what Emily saw and sees; we were communing across the absence of time. I gazed at the images of George Eliot and Elizabeth Barrett Browning on one wall, at her mother's primitive painting above the stove, at photographs of Gib, her nephew and Judge Lord, at the exact replicas of her bureau and tiny writing desk. Two chairs were original, one at her writing desk, and I saw her sitting there later, writing, or gazing out the window deep into the eternity and immortality of worlds in her mind.

I don't know when I sat down at the card table set up for me, but I settled down somehow and began to write. Once I began, I wrote without pause until I felt her

standing behind me, felt her hand on my shoulder, heard her laugh and her voice.

"Those lines are growing, Bearded," she said, meaning, I supposed, too long and shaggy. She was right, of course, and I laughed, too. The pressure of her palm on my shoulder lingered then lifted. As it did, I wanted to follow, tracking her spirit-scent just as Carlo had often done. I realized I felt peaceful, at ease in her room, as if I'd been there "centuries before." Wait! Could I have been Carlo, her giant, shaggy Newfoundland? That really set her off and she laughed like a waterfall.

It was Emily herself who marked our time. "You're going in five minutes," she said. "Is there anything you want to ask me?"

"Yes," I said aloud. I had been saving it for the end of this encounter. We both knew the answer before I spoke again; yet, I persisted. "44 years ago, why did you stop? Why didn't you pull me down all the way to you?" Her thrilling laugh-

ter again. I knew. Every day since that first day, Emily answered my "why did you stop" by never stopping.

"I am always pulling you down to me!" she said. "I never stopped. I've been with you all your life, and here you are."

She was right. As she said the words, I felt Truth. I was alive in that magical realm of Emily's "Internal difference – / Where the Meanings, are – ." That is the ultimate destination of her poetry odyssey, of her life, and mine. So, for as long as I am able, I take my fences and imagine the deliciousness to come, the harvest of new Bulletins and the discovery of unread fascicles in the world next to this one.

Time to go. I lingered behind her chair and thought to peer out a south window to the lawn below, and there, staring up at me – a plump rabbit standing on its haunches. I smiled, for that, too, was Emily's playfulness. Together, we walked downstairs, out of the house, into the balmy twilight.

Ackmann, continued from page 22

mention this as we talk, for the language in which she writes him. In her book, itself a model of prose that "breathes," she says of the puzzle of the "Master": "As searing as her words were, they may have provided release. Emily always turned to language to soothe or lessen her distress. . . . She never shied away from looking anguish in the eye or contemplating its aftermath. To do so was an act of dominion over misery and resistance to inertia."

She never shied away from celebrating delight, either, and Martha Ackmann, who recounts the sadness of Dickinson in careful, contained, but sometimes soaring language

of her own, is also a gifted speaker – with a wonderful sense of humor. She has spoken in colleges and universities, NASA installations and Major League Baseball events as well as on NPR, CNN, and ESPN, but the one this interviewer remembers best is for her (EEH), a "pivotal" moment in a life as full of Dickinson as that of Martha's. At the 2001 EDIS conference in Trondheim, Norway – she produced a presentation that no one there will forget. At the time no pictures had surfaced purporting to be an aging Dickinson, so practical Martha Ackmann took the one we all know from her 16th or 17th year to detectives who search for children who have been missing for years. What the detectives did to age Dickinson was pretty horrifying, a decided contrast to the youth-

ful looking face and hair described by Mabel Loomis Todd, who first saw Dickinson after her death. What conclusions Martha drew from the exercise I don't recall, but I drew from it that a Dickinson scholar with that much imagination and wit and organizational abilities was someone to get to know. Talking to her about her terrific book and her multi-faceted career has been a fine way to begin that process.

Eleanor Heginbotham, Professor Emerita at Concordia University in St. Paul, and Lecturer in English at the University of Maryland, is the author of Reading the Fascicles of Emily Dickinson: Dwelling in Possibilities. She leapt at the opportunity to the interview former EDIS President and a long-time friend.

International Dickinson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uLqfi4HxHvY&t=3078s>

The opening session of the 2020 meeting established an appropriate theme for the whole conference, as many international members who had never attended an Annual Meeting in Amherst were able to join the online sessions. “International Dickinson” was a preview of the Fall 2020 issue of the *Emily Dickinson Journal*: contributors presented brief versions of their articles. The reminder of the truly international character of this international society was one of the points of greatest value of the meeting.

The first presenter was recently-elected Board member Baihua Wang. Her paper, “Will You Ignore My Sex/Gender?” Emily Dickinson’s 1862 Letters to T.W. Higginson Revisited,” was organized as a play in five acts: Act I, A Young Contributor; Act II: “I enclose my name”; Act III, “If my Verse is alive”; Act IV: “I am in danger – Sir –”; Act V: “Myself the only Kangaroo among the Beauty.” The *EDJ*

article will be a translation of the Chinese version, published in 2019 in China.

Next, Juan Carlos Calvillo and Min-Hua Wu offered their thoughts on translating Dickinson. Calvillo, from the College of Mexico, presented an excerpt of his forthcoming book, “Emily Dickinson: A Study of Poetry in Spanish Translation.” He discussed the supposed untranslatability of poetry. While acknowledging Robert Frost’s famous statement that “poetry is what is lost in translation,” he said that translation has been achieved on countless occasions: “a sublime, unique, irreparable event.” Wu’s paper was about “Translating Yu Kwang-chung’s Chinese Article ‘Emily Dickinson: A Bee Bursting into Eternity’ into English.” Yu, Wu said, explained the peculiar difficulties of translating certain Dickinson poems, based on Ezra Pound’s theory of the three dimensions of poetry, sound, image, and usage.

Cuihua Xu’s “The World Holds a Pre-dominant Place in my Affections: Emily Dickinson’s Letters to Abiah Root” was an abstract of a book consisting of two interpretive essays and a transcription of the letters. One essay is about nature and culture, and the other is about how Dickinson represented herself in this early correspondence.

Finally, Enikő Bollobás offered a summary of her monograph. Her presentation, “Our Visitor from Infinity – On a Dickinson Monograph in Hungarian,” presented the poet as a subversive thinker and innovator. The book’s four chapters address “Formal-Linguistic Innovations” on language and form; “Modes of Thematic Treatment,” on forms of knowing; Modes of Thinking and Troping,” on connecting forms of knowing with figurative tropes; and “Dickinson’s Concept of Gender” on metaphor and catachresis.

Dickinson @ a Distance I

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nDoUeFuCjRk>

Two panels addressed directly the topic of the meeting, “Dickinson at a Distance.” In the first, six speakers, speaking for five minutes each, presented a range of reflections on the topic. The first, Cheryl Weaver-Amenta, from SUNY-Buffalo, presented a piece of her research about “Disruptions and Futurity in 19c Women’s Friendship Networks.” Her specific topic was one of Emily Dickinson’s least known friendships from her time at Amherst Academy. Harriet Merrill was one of “the five,” along with Abby Wood, Abiah Root, Sarah Tracy, and Dickinson. Their friendship models of the disruptions to friendship seen more generally in antebellum women’s friendship: anxiety about the distance confronted by epistolary communication, separation due to

marriage, and the always looming possibility of early death. Dickinson’s friendship with Hattie Merrill was disrupted by all three.

Next, Adalberto Müller, from the Universidade Federal Fluminense, in Brazil, presented a new view of Dickinson’s geographical references in “Dickinson Latina: Imaginary Geography.” He connected her frequent use of geographical references in her poetry to her use of foreign commodities in her life. For example, Dickinson mentions Brazil in four poems. In 19th-century US households, Brazil would have been associated with Brazil threads and brazilwood – two commodities that were familiar because of the expansion of trade fueled by imperialism. Remote New

Englanders could experience an exotic way of life that revealed their connection to transnational capitalism. References to Tunis, Tripoli, cochineal, rum, gems – all are embedded in an emerging cosmopolitanism. The poems are consequently shaped by these associations even as they help to shape a reader’s understanding of them.

Maria-Milagros Rivera Garretas, professor emerita of the University of Barcelona, spoke about Dickinson and ancient traditions of monasticism, in “‘Immured in Heaven!’ The Distance of Love in European Beguine Mysticism and in the Poetry of ED.” Rivera suggested that Dickinson wrote at least three poems inspired by the beguines – lay women living in

ANNUAL MEETING

monastic communities. Dickinson could have read about the tradition in *The Princess, or the Beguine, A Tale of the 12th Century*, an 1835 novel by Lady Sydney Morgan. The beguines were defined by their symbolic independence from men: their chastity meant sexual freedom, the freedom to love whom you wanted to love. They lived in small communities – two to ten people – and by the 19th century were part of an international fashion related to women’s sexual pleasure. Rivera hears echoes of their concerns not only in poems that connect monastic and sexual imagery, like “Immured in Heaven!” (Fr1628), but also in Dickinson’s famous “Man of Noon” letter to Sue, in which she referred to “these unions by which two lives are one / this sweet and strange adoption” (L93).

EDIS members learned about an entirely different way of thinking about Dickinson and Distance in Julia Uhr’s presentation, “The Stillness in the Room: An Escape Room Game and Immersive Emily Dickinson Reading Room in Virtual Reality.” The final scene in Uhr’s escape room game is set in a virtual reality replica of Dickinson’s bedroom, right

down to the wallpaper, the Elizabeth Barrett Browning portrait, and the painting of “The Fishing Party” by the poet’s mother. What Uhr has created, she says, is nothing less than an immersive Emily Dickinson research environment. Poems on the bookshelf can be opened and placed around the room, complete with images of the original manuscript (from the *Emily Dickinson Archive*). There are white boards, on which visitors can take notes, write poems, or draw pictures. These too can be taken off the wall and placed around the room. The curious may contact Uhr at Julia.uhr@colorado.edu.

The fifth presenter, Rocio Saucedo Dimas, discussed Rosario Castellanos’s translation/translations of Dickinson in her presentation, “Translating Distance: Rosario Castellanos’s ‘If I shouldn’t be alive.’” A novelist, playwright, and journalist, Castellanos saw distance as essential to translation and to creation: “to be, for a brief moment, the incarnation of the other, admired in the distance.” She translated only three poets: Saint-John Perse, Paul Claudel, and Emily Dickinson – “the only kangaroo among the diplomats.” Her translations were

adaptations. Saucedo examined Castellanos’s translation of one poem, “If I should’nt be alive” (Fr210), finding that the second stanza of the translated version is more bitter, more urgent. Translation of the words of someone distant gives the translator an opportunity to say, in Castellanos’ words, “that which we wish to have found, formulated, invented”; or as Saucedo put it herself, “we sometimes find in distance what is closest to us.”

In the final short presentation, Joby Thomas Chirayath spoke from Madhya Pradesh about how the current experience of quarantine provides a perspective from which to reconsider Dickinson’s self-imposed confinement as neither madness nor aberrant. She could travel to far away places while sitting in her home, just as EDIS members were doing in the very moment. She kept in contact with loved ones – and with future generations – through notes and messages. Confinement became for her the condition of connection with the world through space and time. He discussed two late poems about distance and expansion, “The Stem of a departed Flower” (Fr1543), and “Obtaining but our own extent” (Fr1573).

Dickinson’s Letters, a Preview - By Cristanne Miller

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-Ugml2tkmw&t=1113s>

In the first keynote address, Cristanne Miller presented information about the much-awaited new edition of Dickinson’s letters, which she has been preparing with Domhnall Mitchell. The edition, forthcoming in 2022, will replace the 1958 three-volume set edited by Thomas H. Johnson and Theodora Ward, which, while recognizably out of date in a number of respects, continues to have a strong influence on any scholarly projects that engage Dickinson’s letters (which is to say, any scholarly project).

So, what’s new? Since the 1958 edition, 28 new letters have been discovered or reconstructed. Some have been published elsewhere, but some will appear in print for the first time, including two letters that were

thought to be missing but in fact held by Sister Mary Jane Powers in Milwaukee.

Moreover, the new edition will include all correspondence written by Dickinson that is in any sense addressed as a letter. The inclusion of 198 letter-poems presents a substantially different impression of Dickinson as a correspondent, as well as including correspondents who did not appear in the 1958 collection, such as Gertrude Vanderbilt.

Miller and Mitchell have redated many letters, some of them quite substantially. Research in Ebenezer Snell’s weather records, newspaper archives, and Lavinia Dickinson’s diary has enabled Miller and Mitchell to date weather and topical references in letters with much greater accuracy. For exam-

ple, a letter to Abigail Cooper, dated “about 1876” in the 1958 edition, can now be dated as mid-March.

But of course the 1858 edition did not indicate that there were any letters to Abigail Cooper – only to “Mrs. James S. Cooper.” Abigail received 27 letters; James S. received none. Mid-century conventions about gender and class led Johnson and Ward to identify married women by their husband’s name. Even so intimate a friend as Elizabeth Holland is indexed only under the name of Holland, Josiah Gilbert. The new edition also reveals the extent to which Dickinson circulated among merchants, shopkeepers, and servants.

Some of the changes in the new edition are due to simple misreading or misrepresent-

ANNUAL MEETING

tation of a word in a manuscript, as when Johnson and Ward fail to decipher the name of a homeopathic medication; and some are due to Miller and Mitchell's different way of construing letters. Johnson and Ward reconstituted some manuscripts as individual letters, when evidence suggest they should not have been, and the new edition clarifies the sequence and context of letters Dickinson received from correspondents, significantly the series that Helen Hunt Jackson sent in the 1870s.

Of especial interest for anyone reading deeply in the letters is the inclusion of what Johnson and Ward labeled as "Prose Fragments,"

enumerating them along with unsent pieces of letters to Susan Dickinson or to other correspondents. Some of these fragments are on stationary, and are in no sense fragmentary. Miller and Mitchell read these pieces of prose as a repository of words and ideas that she wanted to preserve, to use either in letters or poems, not as drafts or fragments of something longer. Johnson and Ward dispersed statements that lay together on the same page, and in other ways make these statements more fragmentary than they actually are.

As with other changes, the new edition's different conception and presentation of "retained prose" gives a different impression of

Dickinson as a writer. Treating such pieces as complete suggests that she "primarily does not draft letters." She may retain verbal gestures for later use, but otherwise, Miller said, the speed with which she writes suggests that her drafts that have survived were exceptions, not the rule.

The keynote ended with Miller citing a recent MLA paper on editorial practice presented by Jerome McGann: one can make a "determinative, not a definitive edition." The 2022 Letters will be determinative for a time: it will help shape a generation of scholarship. But new discoveries will continue to call for a future revision of the text.

Away from Home: A Virtual Trip to the Museum

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0JmT6LKoN4A>

A highlight of the virtual meeting was "Away from Home, A Virtual Trip to the Museum." Five guides at the Emily Dickinson Museum presented objects from the collection and built essays around the object – all of which were presented as narrated slide presentations, and all of which proved startlingly illuminating about sides of the poet's life that one does not regularly consider.

After an introduction from Director Jane Wald, during which she revealed that work has just begun on a project to catalog the whole collection for the first time, Becky Lockwood presented the first object – "Emily Dickinson's White Dress." This was an object with which everyone was familiar. But Lockwood presented it in such a way as to show Dickinson's connections to family, town, country, and world. Dressmaking, Lockwood reminded the audience, occupied much of the poet's time. Seamstresses would cut the fabric, but the actual needlework done by families. Seamstresses would work for several days just preparing the fabric; the work was so badly paid that some actually had to resort to prostitution to make ends meet. Once a dress was made, care for clothing was still

demanding. The process took several days. After water was heated in kettles, the dress would be washed, rinsed, hanged, ironed, and mended. The Dickinsons hired workers to help, but many servants (not the Kellys) would refuse the work as too arduous.

Next, Melba Jensen presented "Fire Within: Emily Dickinson's Stove." Combustion, she noted, was for Dickinson a frequent image for poetic invention. The Pleasant Street house used to have a central chimney – she quoted Melville on how tiers of hearths would center all household activity. In the Homestead, cast iron stoves fit into extant fireplaces, to heat individual rooms: the more castiron was exposed, the more space would be warmed. The iron foundry just east of Amherst, in Worcester – Wheeler Iron Foundry – made iron for all sorts of industries, including the railroads so closely tied to the Dickinson family. As Dickinson's poem "To my small Hearth" (Fr703) illustrates, the stove was in the 19th century a figure rich with associations: discussion, gossip, jest, intimacy. When the poet used language of forges, she alluded to joy, safety, and satisfaction; also Christian purification, sin and redemption – refining. If these

imply somewhat incompatible emotional registers, it serves to show why Dickinson may have been drawn to the image.

At least one member of the audience had no idea that a music case was called a "Canterbury." Greg Mattingly, whose presentation about the object consisted largely of music recordings, said that Dickinson's sheet music case, basket, and drawer included a collection of marches, dances, and minstrel songs. The most fascinating part of his presentation included recordings of the Hutchinson Family Singers, a Massachusetts-based group of performers who were popular throughout the 1840s and 50s, and who at one point toured England with Frederick Douglass.

Polly Peterson told the audience that the picture over the mantelpiece in the bedchamber, "The Fishing Party," was painted by the poet's mother in 1827. The picture, which shows an apparently enslaved black man serving a party of white people, raises the question, what led Emily Norcross Dickinson to paint such a scene, and what does it mean that it hung in the house years later? Peterson discovered that a version of the scene painted by Lydia Hos-

ANNUAL MEETING

mer in 1812 hangs in the Concord Museum, but the original was “Angler’s Repast,” painted by George Moreland in 1789. All versions include the same five figures. It was widely available as a mezzotint, and it served as a pattern for needlework: Emily Norcross had also created a needlework piece based on same drawing. To decode the image, Peterson noted that slavery was an emblem of prosperity and prestige, like a house and a carriage, long after the institution was abolished in Massachusetts. She quoted Dickinson’s poem “Color – Caste – Denomination” and noted that while the poet did largely surmount her biases regarding caste and denomination, she never quite lost her discomfort about color, and perhaps never even registered the painting’s message about privilege.

Finally Melissa Cybulski discussed Dickinson’s trip to Mount Vernon in 1855. Her object was a band box with blue decorations and a picture of the Capitol Building, acquired during the five-week period when Emily and Lavinia accompanied their father to Washington. Little is known about the trip, except that the Dickinsons had a copy of Morrison’s *Stranger’s Guide to the City of Washington*, and that they did visit Mount Vernon. Dickinson’s letter to Elizabeth Holland about the trip describes how they glided down the Potomac in painted boat, mounted a tangled pathway, and found

“Fishing Party” by Emily Norcross (1804 – 1882)



themselves speechless; her impressions were accredited in many other travelers’ visits to the shrine.

Dickinson Scholars in Conversation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUEeIbF9554>

Some of the most satisfying and illuminating sessions at annual meetings over the years have come when a roomful of Dickinson lovers have had the opportunity to work through a poem with the guidance of people who have spent their lives thinking about the poet. Dickinson Scholars in Conversation brought together two of the scholars who helped make Dickinson the most important US poet, Jane Donahue Eberwein and Suzanne Juhasz. Each scholar recounted a brief story of her history teaching Dickinson, then offered ways in which the much discussed poem “After Great Pain” continues to fascinate them as readers.

Juhasz confessed that, as a poet (who has written a great deal of prose) she was “still a formalist at heart.” She said that for her there are two problems with the poem. First is the figurative language: there is no part of the poem that is not figurative. Why? To what effect? Second is the body imagery: “Nerves,” “Heart,” “Feet,” – why, she asked, is the

generic person dissected, when the poem is about internal feelings, not physical ones. Metaphors meld into one another; figure piles on figure; and it all leads – where? Does the person thus lost in figuration live or die? Maybe the confusion is the point.

Eberwein, who was introduced to contextual studies as a graduate student at Brown, asked what kinds of context the poem engages. A body unable to report what it is experiencing could recall testaments of extreme anguish from Civil War battlefields. Dickinson could likewise be in dialog with the Puritans on the topic of “circumference”: the extreme end of consciousness. The image of “Quartz contentment” made Eberwein think, proleptically, of Emerson’s gravestone (not to mention that of Austin Dickinson, reflected an audience member). In more distant anticipation, Eberwein found it hard to read the poem without thinking of people in intensive care from Coronavirus, unconscious, between life and death. But the most potent context she

mentioned comes from another Connecticut River author, Jonathan Edwards, who wrote in an early reflection about the impossibility of thinking about nothingness: “we must think of the same that the sleeping rocks dream of.”

Fascicles, letters – the possible contexts multiply as frantically as Dickinson’s own figures. In the Q&A more readings were suggested, and audience members blew up the chat with further possibilities. We learned, for instance, that there is no word meaning “grown” in Spanish, and that the Scottish Common Sense philosophers, brooding about how to name emotions or internal sensations, insisted that metaphor is the ground of thought.

Overall, this session became an exemplary illustration of what can happen when many people focus all their attention on a highly suggestive but fundamentally ambiguous poem that they all love.

Dickinson, Disaster, Dimensions

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0JIVt_Wffe

The papers for this panel had been accepted for presentation at the canceled American Literature Association meeting in San Diego; panelists were invited to present a highly condensed version for this shorter session.

In the first paper, “Nerve in Marble’: Emotion, Disaster and Geology in Dickinson,” Amanda Lowe described Dickinson’s images of metamorphic rock. The woman who had studied Edward Hitchcock’s geology textbook at Amherst Academy found in these slowly transforming rocks an emblem for slow change in the aftermath of destructive events. The slow conversion of elements in rocks like granite and marble stretched the human capacity to conceive of time. Hitchcock had observed that solid rocks represent not permanence but constant flux. Dickinson found the same unimaginably protracted plasticity in persons that Hitchcock found in rocks. In “I’ve dropped my Brain” (Fr1088), the analogy to metamorphosis reveals the such slow change in the context of a human disaster.

Jamie Fenton addressed Civil War imagery in “Dread, but the Whizzing’: Emily Dickinson’s Catastrophic Micro-Histories.” Taking her point of departure from the mini ball that killed Frazer Stearns, Dickinson used what she had learned about this new technology to take up the point of view of the soldier who hears the “Whizzing” before the obliterating impact: she “assumed the new information seamlessly into her style.” Poems like “If any sink, assure that this, now standing –” (Fr616) show her reaching out in her poetry to imagine the experience of distant soldiers.

In “Emily Dickinson and the Politics of Time,” Maria O’Malley explored the relation of the flâneur, a figure one might more obviously associate with Whitman, to Dickinson’s interest in “the ephemeral, the fleeting, the contingent.” “They shut me up in Prose” (Fr445) presents the radical instability of the figuring mind, the mind in perpetual flux. The poem hinges on “still” as it moves vertically and longitudinally, rather than

horizontally. Similarly, in “I think To Live – may be a Bliss” (Fr757), the gap between Bliss and the mind’s capacity to think about it reveals how the mind distorts the seen and known. Theorists say the flâneur experiences the street in “stages”; but there is no such stasis here, no stable way to ponder something dynamic. For Dickinson, O’Malley said, the experience of space in the poem is not simply an exercise in perception but a means of engaging with the other.

Lastly, Jan Leonard Maramot Rodil, in “The Possibility of a Queer Lyric: Reading Difficulty in Dickinson’s Poetics,” used “Her breast is fit for Pearls” (Fr121) to interrogate what we speak of when we speak of a queer lyric, an inherently unstable construct. The poem presents an “I” and a “Her” and an erotic context, and thus invites a queer reading. But reading the poem that way involves a contextualization that makes any such reading provisional. To read Dickinson’s queer lyrics means keeping all possibilities open.



Dickinson at a Distance II

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fknP6O_TNNQ

The reflections of this session involved reading Dickinson during a pandemic, when isolation and loss are constant.

Martha Nell Smith began the session with a reflection on “Distance and Beloveds.” She presented a small page of Susan Gilbert Dickinson’s notes on her intimate memories of her beloved Emily: “Emily’s love of flowers”; “Affection was her strength”; “Loved to play music piece ‘The Devil.’” Such notes, she suggested, reflect what Emily and Susan would have considered “phosphorescence of knowledge,” as opposed to simple facts. On the other side of the list is a quotation from Walter Pater, “A Spring-Tide of Intellectuality,” from his writings about Heraclitus. Then below it, the note reads, “Distance ‘tis till thyself, Beloved. E.” Smith noted that Susan wrote the first biographical sketch of Emily Dickinson, her obituary. In it she emphasized her way with words, her talk, her kindness, her unselfishness. Susan’s own kindness showed when she thanked Thomas Wentworth Higginson for bringing Dickinson’s works to the public – when arguably she ought to have had that

honor. “Time avails not,” as Whitman wrote. For those who love the poetry and appreciate the woman who wrote it, “Distance ‘tis,” till her phosphorescent presence.

In contrast to Smith’s evocation of Dickinson’s ravishing presence, Amy Nestor presented “Sliverings – Variations upon ‘Each that we lose takes part of. . . .’” Nestor spoke about Dickinson’s sense, articulated in “Each that we lose takes part of us” (Fr1634) (from a letter to Frances and Louisa Norcross after death of Lord), that “Anguish finds out” (L891). Deaths, Nestor said, can “strand us outside the reach of futurity.” With each death, we lose a portion of what constituted us. Nevertheless, “A crescent still abides.” From these reflections on a poem about personal loss, Nestor turned to the mass losses that take their portion by transforming what we’ve taken for granted. Only memory can make restoration.

In “‘I gave him Leave to Life’: Dickinson’s Non-service and Emerson,” Yanbin Kang – presenting at a distance – discussed Dickinson’s “creative conversation” with Emerson’s

self-reliance, in which, as she put it, he “regards non-service as an essential part of a perfect service.” Discussing the poems “It came his turn to beg” (Fr1519), she spoke about how distance could reanimate affection, when contact might, in a reference to Aesop’s fable, “revive the snake” of enmity.

In the next paper, Cynthia Kreuz-Uhr offered a ludic reading of “This is my letter to the world” (Fr519). Her paper, titled “Reading the Letter Never Written,” presented the poem as a fractal on the concept of a letter. “Letter” means alphabetic unit, epistle, agent (“one who lets – blood letter”), and even God – who can be represented as a single letter, Hei, I, X. Dickinson’s “Letter to the world” compacts the maximum power into the smallest verbal unit. Christ is the alpha and omega. In Dickinson’s time, the ampersand was a letter of the alphabet – the final letter, according to Dickinson’s own *New England Primer*. So if the last shall be first, then the final letter of the poem moves to the beginning to make “Ethis,” or more coherently, “Et his” – “Et” meaning “and,” or ampersand: the last shall be first.

Dickinson on Remote Suffering - By Eliza Richards

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ys6oz8Tu7nU&t=7s>

In the second keynote, Eliza Richards drew on her work on media coverage of the Civil War (*Battle Lines: Poetry and Mass Media in the US Civil War* [2018]) to address “Dickinson and the Problem of Remote Suffering.” Noting that the topic of Dickinson and the Civil War may seem “done with” by this point, she suggested that we may in fact just be ready to start to look at her work more closely.

With a nod to the pandemic, Richards asked, how are we to respond, not to immediate suffering but to mass suffering – suffering

that is distant, yet brought close by mass media? A number of Civil War poems invite us to consider the relation between personal and public experiences of suffering. What connects the poet’s experience to the experience of others in the world?

During the Civil War, Richards reminded us, the news itself was news: newspapers and magazines depicted images of suffering (of white soldiers, less so of slaves and black soldiers) with a kind of immediacy never seen before. Dickinson repeatedly meditated on the difference between the agent de-

living news of suffering and the feelings aroused in the audience.

At times, the poet seems to take a clinical approach to suffering. With no clearly embodied speaker and no sense of who’s suffering in the poem, news itself becomes the active agent. “Sorrow,” she famously wrote, “seems more general” than it did; “it’s dangerous to value, for only the precious can alarm” (L298). If so, Richards asked, then how is one to care for those who are not precious? If sorrow is for the precious, then what develops at a distance

ANNUAL MEETING

is pity: pity is what converts suffering into literature.

Yet pity is somehow too vicarious, too disengaged. Richards argued that this was the issue for Dickinson, and it's what accounts for the voicelessness of the speaker – the lack of a determinative individual expressing pity; the abstraction of the place of action in the poems; and the “telescoped” perspective, which conveys the enormity of the subject without simultaneously giving any guidance about what to think of it.

Richards focused on two poems. In “The Name of it is ‘Autumn’” (Fr465), images of bloody mayhem take a purely aesthetic turn, as if the speaker is giving up on trying to make herself feel something. Likewise, in “They dropped like Flakes” (Fr545), mass death is rendered in an aesthetic way. Some have felt the poem is sentimental, with its neatly conclusive final lines, “But God can summon every face / On his Repealless – List.” But the conclusion does not adequately dispel the instability of the images: “Stars” don't drop, nor do petals

– and certainly there is no “wind with fingers.”

As a coda, Richards mentioned “The Black Berry – wears a Thorn in his side” (Fr548), which she called a “repulsive poem.” Here, distancing the representation of suffering seem positively unethical, even complicit. Dehumanizing strategies that may be intriguingly problematic in representations of distant battle fields are intolerable in representations of enslavement. Nowhere is it clearer that pity does not necessarily humanize.

Emily Dickinson Archive: A User's Guide

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cdnKztEmXPE&t=1511s>

and

Dickinson's Birds: A Public Listening Project

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UIFiW5J5xOo>

Saturday afternoon highlights included two sessions, the recordings of which every lover of Dickinson will want to save in their file of favorite websites. In the first, Leslie Morris, Gore Vidal Curator of Modern Books & Manuscripts at the Houghton Library, presented “A User's Guide” to the *Emily Dickinson Archive*. Many who regularly use the Archive certainly learned that they had not been using it as optimally as they could.

Immediately after Morris' lecture about the *Emily Dickinson Archive*, of which she is General Editor, Marta Werner described her own latest venture into the world of archives, “Dickinson's Birds: A Public Listening Project.” Werner's presentation was as lyrical as any bird call, and more than any of the other presentations here recounted deserves to be heard in its entirety. Birds crowd Dickinson's work, Werner said, even though the poet names

only a relatively small number of the 500 species that nest in the valley. Birdsong is “the most constant, evanescent sound she recorded through writing in an age before the technologies of recording had been invented.” Birds' sound-making is place-making. It “orients humans to our own ecological emplacement in nature, locale, and time.” For Dickinson, birds told the season and the hours of the day. While we can't get “clairaudient access” to Dickinson's avian soundscape, we can capture the songs she would have heard. In what years are her bird allusions most numerous, and in what years do their numbers diminish? And what can her reactions to birds tell us about the “changed meters” between her sound-world and our own?

To answer these and other questions, Werner had prepared what she calls “a digital humanities work of the ‘third wave,’ combining elements of the archive and the

scholarly edition.” Her archive combines manuscript references with audio files and sonograms of bird calls, “in relation to the unfolding hours of the day, the revolution of the seasons, and the calendar of her writing life.” The archive includes maps that detail the arrivals and departures of birds as well as the geography of the poet's own calls, marking the changing configurations of her correspondence over the years.

Werner concluded her presentation with an invitation: she hopes that all who come to her site, which will go live in January 2021, to contribute to it. She welcomes field recordings; field notes; reflections on the significance of birdsong to our own sense of emplacement; close readings of Dickinson's bird writings; creative responses to Dickinson's birds in poetry, art, and music; and meditations on the place of the lyric in the Anthropocene.

Emily Dickinson in Song: A Discography, 1925-2019 Compiled by Georgiana Strickland

By George Boziwick

EDIS members know Georgiana Strickland as the legendary long-time editor of the *EDIS* Bulletin. She also spent many years as the managing editor at the University Press of Kentucky. Her discography of settings of Dickinson's poems is available as a .pdf file through the Humanities Commons website: <https://hcommons.org/deposits/item/hc:28401/>. It will prove valuable to anyone with an interest in music, poetry, ekphrasis, or digital humanities generally.

Earlier this year, my library colleague Paula Hickner, Music Librarian and Head of the Fine Arts Library at the University of Kentucky, Lexington, posted to the Music Library Association listserv (the other MLA) an announcement of the online publication of Georgiana Strickland's *Emily Dickinson in Song: A Discography, 1925-2019*. I was thrilled to see that the discography had been published and gratified to know that Strickland's discography was just a click away from being added to hundreds if not thousands of academic and public libraries research pages around the world.

Our fellow Dickinson scholar, Georgiana Strickland has amassed an enormous amount of information vital not only to music librarians, but to audiophiles, Dickinson fans and Dickinson scholars worldwide. Not since Carleton Lowenberg's *Musicians Wrestle Everywhere* (1992) have we seen anything comparable regarding a compendium of the musical settings and adaptations of Dickinson's work. The main focus of Lowenberg's book was to document as many composers' published and unpublished scores of settings of Dickinson's poems and letters as were available to him at the time.

In a paper delivered at the *EDIS* Conference in Paris, in 2016, Georgiana Strickland discussed the impetus for her discography, which was then fully underway. She quoted from a review of Lowenberg's work: "As Jonnie Guerra says in *The Emily Dickinson Handbook*, 'these works [listed in Lowenberg] constitute significant interpretive acts from which Dickinson's readers have much to learn.'" Strickland's discography then is clearly an interpretive

response to Lowenberg's bibliography. She notes that since the publication of Lowenberg's 1992 inventory of musical settings, "one problem for Dickinson's readers wanting to learn from these settings has been locating performances that could be heard."

With the publication of *Emily Dickinson in Song*, a vision for achieving that goal has been realized. Strickland states in her preface that her discography contains nearly 450 recordings dating back to 1925. "More than half of them [were] released in the present century at a rate sometimes exceeding 20 recordings per year. They include well over 2,000 performances of settings of more than 500 Dickinson poems. Nearly 300 composers are represented, the majority new to the canon since Lowenberg's inventory." 200 YouTube videos are represented, covering the genres of classical, jazz, pop, rock, and others.

As expected, the largest category of settings is still that of the traditional "art song." Choral settings by concert composers are also well represented. The earliest listing in the discography is a 1925 recording from the RCA Victor archives. This acoustic recording features Richard Crooks singing James G. MacDermid's 1908 setting of "If I Can Stop One Heart from Breaking," a poem which (according to Lowenberg's book) saw four settings in the decades after Dickinson's poems were first introduced to the public. The most well-known composer's setting of Dickinson's poems is of course the 1949-50 song cycle for voice and piano by Aaron Copland. Sixty recordings are represented in Strickland's discography, featuring all or some of Copland's twelve songs,

including recordings of the eight songs from his cycle which Copland orchestrated between 1958 and 1970.

It is abundantly clear from Lowenberg's book and Strickland's discography that the musicality of Dickinson's words finds a vibrant companionship with many composers. Strickland notes that "a frequent explanation heard from many composers attributes her appeal to the music that permeates the poems, that leaps off the page," or that the music seems to compose itself (which has been my experience). Dickinson scholar Emily Seelbinder observes that "[Dickinson] had music in her blood."

The first and most robust section of Strickland's discography is a listing of "Recordings with Vocal Works by a Single Composer." Just a glance through this section tells the informed reader that every mainstream and middle stream concert music composer is represented. The many recognizable names here are too numerous to cite, but a short curated list of composers may give any curious reader of this review a number of names worth exploring: Ernst Bacon, John Duke, Daron Hagen, Juliana Hall, Lori Laitman, Alice Parker, Leo Smit, Gwyneth Walker, and Eric Whitacre.

Aside from the hundreds of concert composers whose names and music are a joy to recall, or perhaps hear for the first time, so too is the list of performers. Many are associated with the last century, and many were, or still are, champions of new music. These include baritone Sherrill Milnes, pianist (organist) Harry Huff, and conductor Robert Shaw; Jan DeGaetani, with pianist Leo Smit, or pianist Gilbert Ka-

REVIEWS OF PUBLICATIONS

lish; singer Helen Boatwright with pianist/composer Ernst Bacon; and singers Phyllis Curtin, Renée Fleming, Thomas Hampson, Barbara Hendricks, Heidi Grant Murphy, Lucy Shelton, Paul Sperry, Eleanor Steber, and Dawn Upshaw.

The second section of Strickland's discography concerns compilations, listed alphabetically by record title. As in the first section, the emphasis here is on concert music and the art song. While musical genres outside of the classical concert world, specifically folk, rock, and pop, have been slower to draw on the well of standard poets for lyrical inspiration, Strickland's discography contains quite a few entries of interest in these areas, many, as Strickland notes, "arising from the worldwide fascination with American culture."

Of note is the American folk artist Josephine Foster's compilation of Dickinson settings, "Graphic as a Star"; the Viennese Gerhard Pilz's setting of "The Brain Is Wider than the Sky"; and "What Does it Mean to Love?" by the American folk singer Rosalie Sorrels (1933-2017), which includes a reading from Dickinson's correspondence, "When much in the woods as a little girl" (L271).

As in the world of classical music, the geographical reach of Dickinson's poetry is clearly established in the jazz world, and dozens of citations in this discography attest to that. They include Kobert, a jazz trio from Norway, featuring settings by ensemble members Daniel Buner Formo and Ingrid Lode; the Swiss/Dutch singer and composer Susanne Abbuehl; and the German pianist and composer Julia Hülsmann. Of interest to Dickinson scholars is the citation for Jane Ira Bloom's *Wild Lines: Improvising Emily Dickinson*, which was heard at the EDIS annual meeting in 2017. Searching under the words "jazz," "folk," or "rock" may not bring up everything in the discography, as not every entry contains a genre term designation. Assigning appropriate genre terms can be understandably difficult; however, this is a good reason to explore and enjoy the breadth of the whole document.

The most intriguing section of Strickland's discography contains a selection of non-vocal musical works inspired by Dickinson's poetry but not actually using her words. They include Mary Howe's *Three Emily Dickinson Pieces* for string quartet; Leon Kirchner's *Five Pieces for Piano* [originally "The Twilight Stood," six Emily Dickinson songs for soprano and piano]; a reading of Dickinson's "Ample make this bed" over music by Marvin Hamlisch for the movie *Sophie's Choice*; and Hunter Johnson's *Letter to the World: Concert Suite for Orchestra from the Ballet* for Martha Graham. Also in this section are pieces that may seem like representative novelties but in fact fill a void for instruments whose repertoire is more limited. A case in point is selections from Copland's *Twelve Poems* arranged for tuba and piano and recorded at the International Tuba Euphonium Conference! Unfortunately no arranger of the tuba version is credited in this YouTube video, which begs for a discussion on the dearth of metadata associated with twenty-first century online formats.

The final section, *Recordings with Works in Miscellaneous Formats*, includes radio broadcasts, works for stage, film, and ballet, interviews, and readings with music. My personal favorite is *Emily Dickinson Poems: A Sequence of 42 Dickinson Poems with Music from Her Time*. This was a 1998 recording produced and sold for the benefit of the Emily Dickinson Museum. The recording features selections from Henri Bertini's *Progressive and Complete Method for the Pianoforte*, a method book which Dickinson owned and mentions in her correspondence (L7). Other highlights from this section include a work for vocal soloists, chorus, and narrator billed as a "Theatrical/Musical Experience"; a selection of Thomas Hampson's streamed audio programs *Song of America*; and three operas, two of which are online performances.

Georgiana Strickland has given us more than a discography. *Emily Dickinson in Song* is a resource on Dickinson and recorded music that continues where Carleton Lowenberg left off. Beyond the scope and therefore missing

from Lowenberg's book is a listing of more than fifty non-commercial sound recordings (cassettes) that he received from composers while he was assembling his bibliography. For the first time, these recordings (housed in the Lowenberg Papers at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln) are cited in Georgiana Strickland's discography. Some of the composers represented on these non-commercial recordings include Samuel Barber, Robert Convery, Lee Hoiby, (from Paul Sperry's "Joy in Singing" series, New York City, 1991); David Leisner, Max Morath, and Marilyn J. Ziffrin.

Both Lowenberg and now Strickland have mined and assembled an aggregate of materials featuring Dickinson's work that will remain available as a valuable and permanent compendium. In Strickland's case, one would hope that her discography, particularly in its compelling YouTube content, will be given periodic updates by those who have the resources and interest to do so.

Strickland herself may have articulated the added value that her discography carries with it. In discussing the many settings of the Copland songs included in her discography, Strickland notes that "These are excellent songs, deserving of wide performance and appreciation, but their dominance of the list probably means that dozens of equally fine settings by other composers are largely passed over by musicians seeking performance material." Certainly the dissemination of this discography will go a long way to addressing that issue.

Dickinson scholar Jonnie Guerra reminds us that the pages of the *EDIS Bulletin* have long been a "vehicle for disseminating information about artistic adaptations of the poet's life and work," certainly under the editorship of Georgiana Strickland, and continuing today (*Emily Dickinson Handbook*). Georgiana Strickland's *Emily Dickinson in Song: A Discography, 1925-2019* continues that trajectory of artistic exploration and dissemination of Dickinson and the performing arts, as she sets before us a permanent and most welcome musical feast at the Dickinson table.

REVIEWS OF PUBLICATIONS

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Emily's "Five Little Coppers"

By Krans Bloemaand

“Only think! We can send a letter before long for five little coppers only, filled with the thoughts and advice of dear friends.”

The February 1845 letter addressed to Abiah and the large cents are from my collection. As you can see at a glance, the pennies are far from “little” in size and are about the same diameter as a Kennedy half dollar. The cents in the photo are ones that were in circulation at the time Emily wrote the letter, so my assumption is that she was referring only to the monetary value of the coins.

This brings to the surface, at least in my mind, the subject of Emily's relationship with money. It might make a good topic for a future article!





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