



# **PEN for Freedom**

**A Quarterly Journal of Literary Translations**

**No. 3**

**Independent Chinese PEN Center**

**Autumn 2010**

*Special Issue of Poetry by members of Independent Chinese PEN Centre*

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*This issue is edited in cooperation with Sydney PEN Center*

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## **One Morning and Others**

*By LIU Xiaobo and LIU Xia*

### *Liu Xiaobo's Poems*

#### **One Morning**

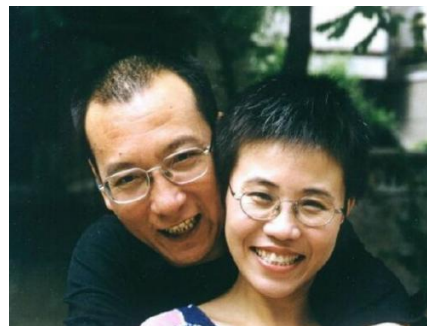
**- To Xia going alone to Tibet**

One morning  
A morning of yawn and fatigue  
I guessed  
Between you and the plateau  
The sky appeared  
Incredibly far-reaching  
With no cloud nor wind nor fog  
Its transparent blue was particularly confusing

When you were leaving  
I was very calm  
As soon as your back disappeared  
A longing for love grew in the distance  
Like the lines on the little palm of a child  
Another person was walking  
Windingly across my body  
To seek a sole word

Words fly without wing  
As smell guides the soul  
The morning light was uneasily fluttering  
There was a slightly strange feeling  
Like a new pair of shoes  
You prepared for this traveling

The shaken time  
Got my dream pregnant but unwed  
The jokul of hypoxia  
Was greedily sucking



The first smoke you blew out

14 July 1993

**A Knife Inserted into the World**  
**- To my little Xia**

You are a knife  
A little knife that can never  
Hurt anybody  
But be inserted into the world  
With no blood, nor cut  
Just shining  
Just being itself  
Just leaving a chilling light for the rotten  
You have often gone downtown or to banquets  
But your heart has always been far away  
Your tip's shine is not dazzling  
But always produces  
A feeling of sitting in the cloud and overlooking the ants  
A hat was lost in the deep valley

Being a knife  
Your sole talent  
Is feeding your wounds in the shadow  
And stretching your legs in between the pages of a book  
Thin and bright

Being a knife  
Without a scabbard ever  
You are confident that your existence  
Is a danger  
Even if by smiling every day  
You will make people embarrassed

Like a bystander beyond the world  
Indifferently and leisurely  
Amazing sharpness

And amazing perfection  
Are all on the opposite edge of the blade

Written in reeducation center, 31 March 1997

## **You, the Dead and the Losers**

**- To my wife**

Darling

You have been wandering among the tombs for whole days  
And silently facing  
The souls of the dead in wind  
The deep gazing  
Made one another's blood clot  
Those complete losers  
Left neither name nor history

At night, your partly drunk glass of wine  
Became a heap of fire  
Lighting up the limited space  
For the dead  
They were talking about the lives  
You were listening about the sufferings  
Both parties were very quiet  
Like the hands of the children  
While sleeping

At the steeple of the dream  
There grew the tender leaves of swollen-stemmed bamboo  
Its suicide was always unsuccessful  
But you  
A woman infatuated with the losers  
Have never failed yourself  
From the smile of a corpse  
You have learnt  
That only death  
Will never fail.

Walking alone on a rainy night  
There was no shadow to talk to  
Lies decorated the sunshine  
All shingly decayed  
The day is more brutal than the night  
Nobody can rescue it

Darling  
Do not close yourself  
Do not let yourself  
Alone be jealous of losers' despair  
Open your door  
To give a shelter to me, also a loser,  
And take me as  
A tragic reason for you to live  
Let the calm smoke  
Rise between you and me

10 September 1998

## **Wind**

**- To Xiaobo**

*By LIU Xia*

You are destined by fate to be like the wind  
Waving and flying  
And playing games in the clouds

I once imagined being with you  
But what home could there be  
To accommodate you  
When the walls will make you choke?

You can only be wind, but the wind  
Has never told me  
When to come and when to go

As the wind comes I cannot open my eyes  
After the wind is gone there is dust everywhere

*December 1992*

*(Translated by Yu ZHANG)*

++++++

***Dr. LIU Xiaobo**, literary critic, politic commentator and human rights activist, Honorary President of Independent Chinese PEN Center and its President in 2003-2007, was held under residential surveillance by Beijing Public Security Bureau since 8 December 2008 and then formally arrested on 23 June 2009, sentenced to 11 years imprisonment on “inciting subversion of the state power” for his participation in drafting Charter 08 and publishing 6 articles on December 25, 2009. He is also an honorary member of German and Sydney PEN Centers.*

***LIU Xia**, the wife of Liu Xiaobo, is an artist and poet.*



## Someone Who Dies in A Vision and Another

By *YANG Lian*



someone who dies in a vision is like a poet who dies in a poem  
summer enters your tower and ascends  
you contemplate like a god, rave like a god  
obsessively count flocks of swans per millennium amend  
the moon that order bleeding from thin dark claws  
puts a rat through its paces with ingenuity  
you grow weary of it all even for the wise, dying is still death  
but writing that twice-lost stony art  
reeks of rot as it gnaws your flesh  
you leap into the flames again like a work discarded

so we die in you  
the only inheritance a marble chair  
your seat amid the keening of the blind  
one man's feet trampling innocent grapes

a vision you said that is to imitate ghosts in order to live  
to make inquiries like an old beggar  
corpsed on the street mourned by the incarnadine teeth of savage cats  
but a rose smelted out of a poem, now that shock will always cause wonder

### **Incident**

you're still that way calmly walking away from an incident  
one incident among so many  
one day among so many neglected months and years  
as rotten fields remove your shoes once again  
snow sustains you on frostbitten toes

the day's overcast, grey, but doesn't look like snow  
only your coldness moves from life towards death  
past events are silent can't leave footprints in the snow

old clothes are always modest just the way the wooden cots of the dead  
slip to the sea from below another pair of bodies making love

no other incident can happen in a past one  
a lifetime of mistakes      stand like towering trees on a mountain  
more distantly white than snow  
that bone walks out of you  
the days walk out of the bone      you  
are thrown away, one behind the other

seeing each other as so many uninhabited moonbeams

*(Translated by Brian Holton)*

++++++

***YANG Lian**, a Board member of International PEN, is the prominent Chinese poet. He was born in 1955 in Bern, Switzerland, where his diplomat parents were stationed. He grew up in Beijing and now resides in London. His oeuvre includes eight volumes of poems and two collections of prose. Selections of his work have been translated into over 20 languages and have been published in many countries. In 1999 he was awarded the Italian Flaiano International Prize for Poetry. His collection of poems *Where the Sea Stands Still* (1999) was recommended for an English translation prize by the British Poetry Association. He has been a judge for the Weimar International Essay Prize Contest and the Voice of Deutschland broadcasting literary contest, an overseas advisor to both the Taipei 2001 International Poetry Festival and the 2001 Berlin International Literature Festival, and a member of the jury for 2006 Lettre Ulysses Award for the Art of Reportage. He co-founded Independent Chinese PEN Centre in 2001.*

## **For My Daughter and Another**

*By LIAO Yiwu*

Let me sit into a corner  
In a prayer room in my fantasy  
And with hands cuffed behind my back  
Make the sign of the cross for you  
Miaomiao, my daughter

A little thing constantly poking your head out  
I eat you from the dust every day  
The cement dormer splits the moon piece by piece  
I have seen you  
From the misty mountains or saddle

Falling  
The rider falling down like a sharp axe  
Hacks more, instant pain into me  
The broken arms  
My two boats bleeding like fountains  
Where are they drifting tonight

Where are boats there is water  
Water! Ah, water  
Water cannot be held  
Nor locked with shackles  
Water cannot be beaten with the fists, boots, ropes  
And sticks to get on the ground

Water  
A substance of crafty nature  
A statement unable to break through repeated attacks  
A criminal unable to sentence

Ah, water  
A semi-translucent dance  
A freely relaxed body overflowing



A king's knife  
As a woman flooding over a man  
Makes human rust  
Coming to naught

Naught  
Simmers my daughter's amniotic fluid  
Flowing from the internal organ of the universe  
And from the bell of origin in swinging sheets

The humming iron gate is brimming with tears congealing on it  
Rusty  
Like the face of the grandfather buried long ago  
When the cage is to submerge into the riverbed  
Will a string of children  
Carry the glistening grass on their heads and get up, or not?

My daughter  
In the river mud you are chewing  
Is there any scream from your father?

(1 July 1991)

### **For One Song and a Hundred Songs**

To sing a song  
I want to wear out my ears

To sing a song  
The guard with an electric baton in his hand  
Ordered me to sing 100 songs

Get out of the cell  
The shadow  
An unreliable lover  
Leaped like a rabbit onto a large wall

My shaved head is the tumour growing at the foot of the wall  
The rain is tears from the whole kingdom of Heaven  
Drained from my eyes to blind me

My tongue was shaking a white flag  
Tinnitus  
I heard the screams of the spittle  
Like a fish or bird put into a pan with boiling oil  
The sun is sowing the garlic to the dark blue  
Erupting in air the choking breath

Still want to sing  
Still want to sing

Forgive me  
Forgive me  
Let me be your earwax  
To be taken out by you  
Spread on your palm for your interest  
I swore to make you comfortable

The pleasure of shivering  
Was second only to ejaculation

In the golden blizzard  
The earwax brayed

— I would like to take off my pants to show you

I would like to be naked  
To show Van Gogh huddled in the soul  
The red-haired ghost guarding Hell's door  
Was bleeding from his ear cavity

I would like to become a carious tooth  
To fuck your nerves to be swollen from within  
I would sit and stare at your left cheek  
To slowly bulge as the pregnant woman's belly

The dentist would use the midwife's forceps  
To pull me  
From your noble mouth

At that time I would sing for you  
And never stop singing for you

— This world is

A wonderful spittoon  
This world is  
A bottomless spittoon

(1 December 1990)

++++++

***LIAO Yiwu**, pennamed as Lao Wei, is a prominent poet, reportage writer and folk musician. In 1990, he was arrested for publishing his long poem Massacre and other works to commemorate the Beijing Massacre of 1989, and later sentenced to four years imprisonment on Counter-revolutionary Propaganda and Incitement. After his release, he was restricted from publication in China and deprived of his right to overseas travel. In 2001, he co-founded the Independent Chinese PEN Center (ICPC), received its Freedom to Write Award in 2007 and was elected as one of its Honorary Directors. The translations of his well-know reportage book, Corpse Walker, have been published in English, French, Japanese and Germany. Other works include the French translation of his collection of poems, Poèmes de prison: Le grand massacre - L'Ame endormie, and his recent reportage, Quand la terre s'est ouverte au Sichuan : Journal d'une tragédie.*

## **Even the Morning Glow Is Stale and Another**

*By MENG Lang*

1

even the morning glow is stale.

so no need to wait in darkness for the so-called dawn.

where light pokes through  
there is sky  
a group of people are trying hard with sharp weapons.

words, and words again  
upon the horizon, whose lips are rising up?

2

does happy flower pollen indulge in travel  
or indulge in settlement? Oh, sweet life  
has no perception of itself

flower pollen stuck to a sharp knife  
could be brought to a strange place  
happiness cannot be too much  
if you too have a slice

cut open the fancy flower rootstock  
a juvenile paper cutter wants to colonize.

3

dark night is torturing the sun at a secret venue  
not until the next morning could you hear  
the horrible screams made by the sun.

I, an unexpected intruder,  
could even feel its feverish forehead  
and at its dying moment  
I will use millions of roosters to wake up the world---



even the morning glow is stale  
even the dawn is nothing new to dirty mankind.

4

but to hold up your noble head, high into the sky,  
look, on the horizon, at whose beautiful shoulders are rising up!

### **Poet**

he is the first voice of this era.  
like a dream this era has no voice  
but he made one.

he is the last voice of this era.  
this era always weeps with cries kept deep in the heart.  
but he cried out.

he is the only voice of this era.  
this era always keeps silent over the oceans of people.  
he is the only voice.

*(Translated by Biao CHEN)*

++++++

**MENG Lang**, founding member of ICPC and coordinator of the Freedom to Write Committee of ICPC, was born in 1961 in Shanghai. From the early 1980s, Meng was very active in the publication and editing of some of Shanghai's major unofficial poetry journals, such as *On the Sea and Continent*. From 1981 until 1985, Meng also edited his own small poetry journal under the title *MN*. In 1986-1988, Meng was living in Shenzhen where he assisted Xu Jingya in editing the "Grand Poetry Exhibition", published in October 1986 in the *Shenzhen Youth Daily* and *The Poetry Press*, and the resultant book, published in Shanghai in 1988. Later, in 1995, after increasing difficulties with the police, Meng was able to emigrate to the USA, where he continues to write poetry.



## **The Passage to Heaven and Others**

*By XUE Di*

I see him from a distance. Sleep  
is a long narrow train with  
many empty seats. I see myself  
sitting, traveling somewhere  
Along the way, on my left  
I see unfold, meticulously, a  
mysterious orange and ochre scape. I  
almost wake up  
Heaven is just back of my  
eyes, almost as if—the train moving  
just a bit faster or  
stopping—I might become  
the first person to see heaven  
and return. I can't tell you  
how that passage  
woke me at midnight and made  
me happy. The train reaches its  
destination in the tropics. I'm  
waking slowly and longing for  
two women I love

*(Translated by Wang Ping and Keith Waldrop)*

## **Valentine's Day**

A loveless childhood  
makes a man contagious all his life.

His drinking water is contaminated.  
Foreign milk and mustard give him the shits.

A lonely cocktail gleams at him,  
as across the tidal flats pilgrim crabs



troop toward something too far off to see.  
Fever reaches for a glass of love.

The darkness lasts and lasts  
we get to know love with our fingertips.

We become connoisseurs  
of illness and, as lovers,

we have blizzards in our hearts.  
Ambition kills us slowly.

The illness creeps from body  
into mind. Its symptom is the itch

to write these poems, poems  
of love, of life, of that proud

high-strung youth, who first became detached,  
and went too far in search of happiness.

*(Translated by Hil Anderson and Stephen Thomas)*

## **Remembering**

Words! before you led me to destruction  
the guava seed was a clean hand  
prodding me to get on my way  
I've torn the skins of things, like crushing grapes  
My heart spread its wings  
hovered in the round heart of the wine  
Men's faces, then, stood in oil  
Had I ever used the word *detest*?

My mouth is a horse's mouth  
—language my hay, dried in sun and air  
The feet of birds are buried under the hay

lizards on one side building a nest  
Talking about them causes me an  
animal pain that pierces my heart  
takes my hand, places it on the word  
to find the spot from which feelers sprout

Childhood! My poems a clean house  
the fields a ball rolling  
Mother's two baskets on a pole across her shoulder  
Over emerald leaves, rivers rush on  
Had I ever worn the anxious look I wear now?  
Make my poems a rag to wipe with—wash here, wash there  
Make grating sounds—wrench here, wrench there  
Throw the books on the floor  
From a snowy sky remote from humanity  
snowflakes striking become soundless tears  
Had I ever tried to praise beauty?  
My entire body glittering quicksilver  
my first song was in my youth  
My teeth shone then like the horns of a fawn  
in the pride of life, my smile unhidden  
I walked then  
like water drawn from a well

Remembering! this conch shell  
Golden yellow makes me see  
the flesh that quivers within life  
Sound of stones contracting  
The sound of flesh  
Waves washing over strands of sinew  
The drowned become shells  
and in my breathing speak their understanding  
of a world that follows after death  
Vengeance on the living, through silent sounds  
Remember! trees felled and dry and rotten  
Ants on a stump  
crawling in a ring  
Light encircles you

People--in moving forward, they fall  
into the deepest dark. The most  
radical among them try hardest to look out  
drawing nearer, day by day, unfeeling flesh  
Seeking that conch  
we are still children  
laughing at the sky

Words! before you lead me to destruction  
I want to see clearly your real shape  
Living among people, I am  
a wolf, not yet grown into exile  
avoiding the traps of words, of phrases  
All around me, throats steeped in venom  
swaying in the barrens! The four seasons  
hide within men's eyes  
revealing the spots of the leopard  
My heart, how can you not press your lips  
to patches of sunlight in the mud?  
How can you not wail for an animal?  
An infant rises before me  
flexes four limbs, cries  
Earth glitters, not yet fouled by men  
Then how can I not sing?  
One after another my poems  
make the sound of chains shaken  
one of my legs crushed by the crowd  
my cry of indignation and despair

Crack the world to its core, you'll find a poem  
Standing in the presence of poetry  
is all that can make my whole body tremble  
Hearing insects make love  
my blood gushes from poetry's heart  
words tumbling over each other  
clambering over light-beams in the wheat  
Empty conch shell. Anxiety and respect  
together forge a brain. Still in a woman's womb

love, gleaming gold from head to foot, rising  
on this fluid, a hand takes hold of the ocean's horn  
From the moment a melody called to me  
life showed me the delicate bones of men  
filled with a marrow of purest gold and  
praised by poetry  
Our ancestors appreciated in silence  
the sharp shards of those bones  
the trembling of these healthy beasts  
at life's very center  
Fields of flowers opened by light

My heart! Could you then pronounce  
from your precious lips the filthy  
word *detest*?

*(Translated by Iona Crook and Keith Waldrop )*

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***Xue DI** was born in Beijing in 1957. He is the author of three volumes of collected works and one book of criticism on contemporary Chinese poetry in Chinese. In English translation, he has published four full length books, *Zone, Another Kind of Tenderness, An Ordinary Day and Heart into Soil*, and four chapbooks, *Forgive, Cat's Eye in a Splintered Mirror, Circumstances and Flames*. A new book, *Across Borders*, is forthcoming in 2010 from Green Integer Press. His work has appeared in numerous American journals and anthologies and has been translated into English, French, German, Dutch, Spanish, and Japanese. After the Tiananmen Square incident in 1989, he was a fellow in Brown University's Freedom to Write Program, and is now a visiting scholar in Brown's English Department. Xue Di is a two-time recipient of the Hellman/Hammett Award, sponsored by Human Rights Watch, and a recipient of the Lannan Foundation Fellowship.*

## **Notes in Winter and Another**

*By BEI Ling*

Amazing how far amazing how dim  
Everything is pushed back behind time  
Those crazy, just crazy days  
Filled with triumphantly scribbled ornamental words  
Days with folded arms  
Remoteness...blocking hands from reaching back

Winter chaos  
Winter can't hold onto sunlight  
You are far from everything  
But your feet still rush

Nothing, nothing left  
No naked stalk twisted yet unserved  
No wind blowing across the roof  
No painful earnestness in search of words

Coaxed alive, incongruous sounds floated up  
Human sounds  
Sounds of radiance and excrement

Serenity of the whole night

*(Translated by W. Barnstone, T. Barstone and Xi Chuan)*

## **Dream**

The ocean of experience  
And the shivering pain of cold nights  
I see a storm casting a huge net  
A cloudburst  
Countless blades sharpened to a gleam  
Pierce your flesh



Submit, for you won't bear it

It is darkness, its congealed power

Closing your lips

It is darkness

Keeping you lonely

My sacred illusion of a nation

Rays emitted by destroying flames

Use your soul to pay the price

*(Translated by D. Mair & W. Barnstone)*

++++++

**BEI Ling**, a poet and essayist, is the founder and editor of *Tendency*, an exile literary journal founded in late 1993 and published in Chinese. In August 2000, Bei Ling was arrested for "illegally publishing" his journal in China. After a brief time in a Beijing jail, with the help of international society and the American State Department, he was released and expelled from China. He is on the Executive Board of the International Center for Writing and Translation at the University of California, Irvine, and a Research Associate at Harvard University's Fairbank Center for East Asian Research. His poetry has been translated from Chinese into English, Japanese, German, French and Spanish. Bei Ling was a winner of the PEN Center US West 2000 Freedom to Write Award.

## **Snow and Another**

*By LI Li*

1

It is not willow floss, it is a requiem  
Performing the winter. It sends whiteness pacing  
Along hospital hallways, stops the cry of “Help”  
From escaping a desiccated mouth

2

Snowman. Personifier of purity  
I stick a candle in its chest  
A wound opens deep inside—passion  
Will solidify like driftwood in a glacier!

3

This snow must be shoveled. Feet slide  
Car crashes happen. Best to leave this place  
Or do the opposite: resist. Under the shovel  
A whisper rings in my ears: “Put more hate into it.”

4

I walk down the street. A blizzard  
Gives a lesson to live by: be silent, keep my head down  
While steam puffs up from a sewer pipe  
The heavens lock my throat with greater stillness

## **Chinese Calligraphy**

Morning and evening  
Swirl around an inkbrush, become black characters  
With a mother’s instruction: “All is contained in this.  
Diligent practice is the route to enduring art!”





Rain lashes all the closed windows  
And mistakes made behind them  
I go journeying with the same kind of ink  
Heaven and sky, why the same meaning?  
Clouds laugh without giving answer  
Sift flakes as large as goose down  
Putting giant inksticks on exhibit  
All is contained in this  
An inkbrush reincarnated for a thousand years—I keep writing  
The land exhibits characters written by the dead  
The sky gazes down upon them  
Quickly it lays out a vast sheet of rice paper.  
Continue this diligent practice!

*(Translated by Denis Mair)*

++++++

**LI Li** is a poet, translator, and member of Independent Chinese PEN Centre and Swedish PEN. Poetry collections in Swedish: *The Gaze within Water* (*Blick i vattnet*, 1989); *Weight of Time* (*Tidens tyngd*, 1990); *On the Run* (*Att fly*, 1994); *Return* (*Retur*, 1995); *You Are the Hermitage* (*En plats som är du*, 1999) and *The Source* (*Ursprunget*, 2007).

## **Irish Symphony and Another**

*By JING Wa*

### **Irish Symphony**

— — **To M. Dooley**

1.

Everyday you sit in a corner in the library

Kids shout like single-syllable letters

I sit down obediently, many people block my view of you

Openings in the red plaid shirt

1877, two buttons, and the Irish eyes

Who would care about what happens in the streets on a Saturday morning

Through the glass, sunshine eventually pierces the window

The chimney in your Dublin home

2.

You are trying to put your hands into pockets

Waves would flow back and forth several times in a body

So would their cellos

Upon playing tunes

Wild geese in the sky would spread their wings all at once

Solemnly I want to move close to you

Hairs would be shining under your lips

The sun falls upon everybody

People's moving shadows are so nice to see

3.

Just like three apples waking up from a nap in a plate



4.

You say everyone's body has seasons

It's summer now, but I see last year's scenes here  
You play the scores so melodiously on the strings

I have never been there  
Where is that, my familiar Ireland

Your grandma's house is old  
Her wrinkles are old as well

I would like to stay here, just here, for a while  
I will not leave until cellos are shifted to small bagpipe

I will leave when there is not a single sound

5.

After that disaster  
I have gone nowhere

But I heard some people farewell me in the afternoon  
I do not know them, but they treat me well  
Right here  
I can move even closer to you

Straighten the fingers  
Let them know where they are from

Let them love Irish black tea

6.

Yes, I have only one posture  
Smoke comes out of your pocket

They salute you

So many people express their thanks to you

You are recalling the message I left you just now

How beautiful the bagpipe is. Did the two white geese eventually love each other?

7 .

It is still on

The whirlwinds blow the broken paper up the street

The audience is running madly

A swarm of flying wild geese disappearing

From many complicated accents I distinguish where they are from

Their feathers still have colors

I found something in the darkness

Two eyes suddenly cruising over your buttons

Kids are calling their mums

All the people in the library are leaving

You are looking at me from another corner

8.

I can hear the sound of hairs falling down

flying close, a group comes back

I am upset because there is no emotion in your face

From where to where, it is always the same road

9.

I know there will be no end to April

Right now I am not in Ireland

Right now I am not here either

*April 24, 2010, ALAMEDA LIBRARY*

## **To Pound**

**--To LIU Xiao Bo**

The rain has never stopped in Paris let alone this month  
Your prison yields to a person who walks in silence

Does anyone look like you?  
I feel worried that you wave to Italy

I am watching the moon in front of my house  
Groups of moths spread out their wings, a group of wings inciting

I am anxious about our conversation yesterday  
I met no one, never even greeted anyone

Today or tomorrow  
A prison-breaker will read your poem at midnight

I am willing to hear your American accent  
I am used to an American accent mixed with French

You have been chained  
Your chains attest to your bitterness

I like a place that is undefiled  
I can enjoy the snow

But it would be frozen  
I knew early on that the cabin was not solid enough

I comb my hair in the winter time but you are not with me  
You haven't been here for a long time

Pound is not a person  
No one knows for certain which cell was his.

I found you while I was looking for someone's shadow

Your poem made Eliot cry

I lower my head to practice my voice

I know that when I walk there are others walking repeatedly

January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010

*(Translated by Mike Dooley)*

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JING WA, poet, was born in the 1970s in Guangdong. She leads a life of traveling, photographing and writing. Her major works include “Mum Doesn’t Need Me Any More”, and “Selected Short Poems by Jingwa”.

## Seeking the Soul of Snow and Others

By *SHENG Xue*

Heart frozen  
while seeking the soul of snow,  
a pure and pure white dream.  
In the wilderness of deep snow,  
there could be such a lot  
of disordered footprints to show.  
So many panicked hearts were borne  
on the boundless field of snow

Looking back boredly  
...  
I see the sun so lonely  
accompanying me and seeking also.

1986

### **Curved**

Quietly  
Curved  
A thread of starlight

Silently  
Curved  
My daydream

Starlight  
Curved down  
Gathering my fond dream

I curved my daydream  
Up to the sky  
Supporting the sun







Leave her  
in  
    companion  
with  
    wind.

1986

### **The Moon Also Has An Impulse to Cry**

Running far away  
it was thought to have escaped from more painful injury  
Wandering forever  
it was thought to have bleached the colours of those who are sorry  
But refusing to become scarred the memory  
has always been twisted into a new posture  
with the simplicity and persistence of a record kept by knots  
strung together, one by one, as direct symbols  
hanging up along the road toward the garden  
Death     is decorated once again

Suddenly opening the rooftop behind  
stained by thick blood  
the killer politely invites people to enter  
All memories come swarming together again  
All wounds are painted up with gorgeous colour  
All heartbreaks are played out again and again behind the scenes  
All forever-partings are rehearsed with fresh lives over and over

The lights are flashing oddly  
while the scenery is changing crazily  
Between opening and closing eyes the scene seems a déjà vu  
People come and go yet the plot still is told with old-fashioned dialogue  
Only pain  
only pain is a fresh experience every time  
sharply scratching all the soft and tender parts over and over

The careful laughter  
has turned around in the Adam's apple of rainy weather  
for there is no need to depart  
for there is nowhere to go  
Hazy lilacs have faded and then bloomed together

Every attempt to turn  
releases the laughter that gathered bit by bit in air  
but the sad wild goose would never return  
One has to expect an earthshaking collapse  
to bury both of the Goddesses Chang'e and Nuwa in despair

A young dragonfly  
handsomely shakes open the Milky Way  
The heaven has got the colors to make us look up  
Pain and memory begin to transmit across the crying sky  
Each limb passed over by airflow is extended into a V  
The dusty tombstones rise to hold each other and cry  
There are roses quietly blooming nearby

The June wind inspects our expressions again  
At last  
all the stars have tenderness on which to rely  
The moon comes calmly to the open  
and has an impulse to cry  
The blinking eyes everywhere  
are waiting for the sun to rise in the sky  
to let no pain ever return

July 2, 2010 at 12:28

(Translated by Yu Zhang)

## **Edmonton Is Home**

Exile is a long lasting night without sleep  
Dream interpreted the language from sun to moon  
Maps directed a road to a bridge flying over ocean

Observing that we all lost tracks of longing

Nation is broken into thousands of pieces of all colors

Tomorrow is alive again

Or we die for a far away green mountain

New ages are calling from the other side of a train

I traveled from death to life

Still I cannot find the star that belongs to me

Home has disappeared from all angles

Oases tenaciously appear ahead

Miracle has completed a journey of sorrow

Edmonton is a home of exile

March 2, 2010

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**Sheng Xue**, a poet and journalist, is the pen name of ZANG Xihong, a member of both Independent PEN Centre and PEN Canada. She grew up in Beijing and moved to Canada soon after the June 4th massacre in Beijing in 1989. In 2000, she won the Canadian Association of Journalists Award for Investigative Journalism and the National Magazine Award, for an investigative report on the lives of Chinese boat refugees published in Maclean's magazine. In 2005, she won the Journalism and Media Award from the "National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada".

## **Memorial and Another**

---To the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of June 4<sup>th</sup>

*By YI Ping*

1  
so far away  
only flowing papers  
are so close  
just under the feet  
always at this time

ever since that night  
everything has turned meaningless  
the huge city has flown away like smoke

ever since that time  
everything comes to one  
looking up at those dead  
waiting for them to speak

2  
Silence, still silence

all words  
become empty  
the blood after deaths  
becomes solid while  
the living become aged  
by regrets and remorse

not allowed to wait for that day  
the caterpillar tracks of power  
are still occupying the wounds

leave pains and sorrows to mothers  
let them shout and cry



on the debris

3

there should be one day  
there should be a return  
blood in the sky will be clean and fly

go rotten  
they are at the top  
looking afar

not just now  
not all the heads  
are close to the ground

mourning mothers  
guarding brothers  
eagles are flying  
above the disaster  
that is their  
eternal inscription

May, 2009

*(Translated by Biao CHEN)*

**For the Dead and For Us As Well**  
**---To Xiaobo and Liu Xia**

You are with the dead souls  
from their world over there, telling of  
That night and  
The bombed-off blood  
Become an eternal cut in your heart——  
No, an eternal imprisonment  
Under the broken night sky  
Wash away vain glories  
And feel the warmth of the dead

Though this, your whole life changed  
To seek the lost dignity  
No matter how difficult  
Your whole life is to be with the dead  
To be a witness for them  
To share their loneliness and miseries  
Day and night  
To find words  
To wash them clean bit by bit  
Sympathy and morality are far beyond fame  
And our remorse as well  
You learned humility among the dead

Love from a wife—  
A home, the opposite of death  
Tender and warm  
Superior over all breaths  
Two united hands  
At deserted tombs---the absolute silence  
Resisting the time of darkness

We cannot find relief from flesh and the trivial  
Under pressure and oppression  
There will always be hopelessness and withdrawal  
But the boundary between life and death is so clear  
In the solemn eyes of countless dead souls  
Yes, with patience and strength  
To bet on a better life  
Together with love beyond life and death  
Letters on the ashes  
Come through heavy blocks of walls and iron bars  
Those are messages for the dead

Any betrayal to the dead will be punished  
They will rot, alive  
Torn-off letters and broken promises are flying over the sky  
The last day is already here  
Another bloodbath runs across everywhere

Panic. People are making their last robbery

When everlasting morality is dead  
And the daily words are rotten as well  
Return to the dead is a rescue  
A re-gain of purity  
Listen to the dead souls narrating  
Present their blood to the stars  
Truth gets witnessed from here  
Blood-shed star lights  
Reset the order for the confused land

Looking up to the starry sky  
Stars are in our hearts  
Humans are the real meaning  
For the dead, and for us as well  
Resist with words, and overcome with words as well  
The dead will return to the human world  
Only with their returns dead morality will be reborn

Hand out your own freedom  
To get freedom for all  
You are in prison  
With blocks of darkness and walls  
But the dead souls would spread words  
To accompany you  
Just like all the shining rainy stars dropped on that day

12-14<sup>th</sup> October, 2009

Note: This poem was written to Liu Xiaobo and Liu Xia, after reading and being deeply touched by Liu Xia's poem "Untitled" to Xiaobo

*(Translated By Biao CHEN)*

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**YI Ping**, poet and member of ICPC, was born in Beijing in 1952. In 1969, he was sent to work in Heilongjiang, and went back to Beijing in 1975. He graduated from Chinese Department, Beijing Normal University in 1979. He left China in 1991 to teach in a university in Poland. Yi Ping now resides in the USA.

## **The New Life**

*By Ah Zhong*



### **The preliminary verses**

The light gleams once. It is my turn to go out, to enjoy a master's privilege in the way of a slave. The coins fall out of my pocket, everywhere on the floor. And I watch the picture carefully. The books fall everywhere on the floor. My thoughts fall everywhere on the floor. When I drive rapidly in the street, the crowd falls on my body, and the birds into my eyes. The war vanishes from the legend, and I rise in the legend. O, poor me! I have to reshape my face, and when you screw up your eyes, my joke has infuriated you. O, poor me! I have hit my face until it is swollen, and my play act is just beginning.

Emotional, I let the light gleam once again. Looking at the drizzle, which hangs in the air at the darkness of the night, I am on my way out...

### **The incantation**

The mature night, the romantic capacity and the death, which the feminine hands take care of! See - the mystery, which sparkles in the eyes; the spring, which the alchemists once invented; the weak gleam in rats' nests; the contentment of the poor people; my hatred and my gentleness in all four seasons...In the closed room I search for the origin of my last life and fall to sleep with the books. To write to my friends - which is my only job - and to make plans to kill time. I submit to spirits and walks; I am intoxicated in the roadway between the toilet and the library, and I try to find out the gleaming old language in the street; when I want for a meal, I suddenly find knowledge about the splendour of the erotic. I shall chase a decent woman and let her son become a beggar in the street. I will make all my neighbors become my enemies, and I will die of the exhaustion in a brilliant fight.

Hear! - the shriek of the demon in the machine; the respiration of the night, which was breathed in and out in my chest; the woman's deep sleep after her copulation; my hungry, perplexed pulsation.

The yellow light makes my face look awful, makes printed myths become more familiar, gets God to identify Himself with Satan, gets the sexual organs to be exposed in the twilight and gets your thought and my thought, which communicate with each other in long distance, to be blocked up.



I am still in want of the bewilderment and the hallucination that feminine hands gave in the daytime; I am still in want of the circle of reincarnation, which the feminine hands have made me to give up; I am still in want of the intoxication, which the womanly hands laid on me bewitchingly.

O, the woman, I will dismiss her during my feast!

The intoxicating night; the sparkling stars. The embryo of the imagination, which comes out of the flesh, is so ripe that it falls on the earth.

### **The exhilaration**

I have to give up my desire to triumph with cruel scolding. I fumble with the old-fashioned verses to make them to glitter again. You are there, and you choke yourself with a string of ideas; your protruding eyes make my compassion stronger and stronger.

Except my ego I cannot save any living thing, or myself.

In the large city I become perplexed. I have no character and just following your intention stir my hands and eyes.

I should give up my longing to be sober at night; I should give that up, to sharpen my thought to a sword. Under the passion of quarrelling, I work up my memory, which has been buried for too long, and mark the trail of the vanishing ones. I cannot stand the screaming, wailing; I escape from solitude and look for the collective life, and I vie with the others for the food in the dirty crib. O, no! I find you an outlying place and mate you with anyone! The weak dusk hovers in your breath as haze. Reject your function of listening and seeing, reject your limbs, reject your senses, which can be symbolized by letters, and fuck purity. O, purity; in the atmosphere of the mating place and under the flowering stars I screw her and have coitus with her. I have got the eternal. It is enough, even though it was so short a time.

### **The summer**

I stroll out from the dizzy summer, from fleshly lust and the secular billow; o the pure wild girl wakes me up, suddenly.

How long time have I slept? What kinds of dirty words have I said? One day becomes one year, the worsening smell of cosmetics is spread everywhere; I tumble in the glimmering street and watch the women's distracted figures and their haggard youth! The crazy cars and their crazy roar tear my thoughts in pieces. The insane arrests, the persecution under the name of so-called justice, the flight with ambiguous explanation, the mouldy rigmarole in the cellar.

Curse life, and flee to death under the unnerving pulse of the clock.

How long time I have slept? The mechanical vibrating time crawls out of the crowd of maggots. To smoke hashish, to drink the tears of the singers or the dancers, to curse and to abreact in the flesh? The life, o, no; and tomorrow, o no!

No, no, no...

In sleep there are the amorous bodies; in sleep there is the art of the friendship; the dreams of publishing; the organism selling itself at auction. In sleep I come into a country of looting.

In the name of literature you go south and north to beg; in the name of literature you curse life. Leading the army of Heaven and its ragged guards, you subdue the souls; to sleep, to scold the idea of the poverty. To curse the tangled games and the summer nights, which make you quiver. O, listen, the familiar songs of the birds are beginning to sound.

The pure girl!

A sober alcoholic recollects the melancholy of freedom. I do not want to have your sympathy.

### **The God in the breeze**

God in the breeze of the morning  
comes out of His quiet and peaceful home, with the energetic gleam in His eyes  
listens to my slight step  
touches my body with His breath  
and drives my fear away with His palm

My poor body  
is so far away from Him.

### **The stock**

The ballet has started already. To communicate - to communicate our existence with the dark night. The only credible path - here we exchange our blood and drive the virus into the others' bodies. The sick human beings, the sick WE, the sick world. You drive the catastrophe to the animals also; it is the guilt of the human beings.

The boy, who has already become old, tidies up our mortal remains; our things left behind, our works that were buried together with us. The dismissed boy. The dismissed sun. The new germs and sponges spread out and grow up in our dream. We are the young generation, and when death exhibits itself, the dismissed boy tidies our mortal remains up.

The black blood streams, and the dead tissues can stop it no more. Everywhere there are festivals of the Demon; everywhere there is the flame of death burning.

I tell you my forefathers' misdeed honestly: it was a stock filled with vulgar men. The boasting of the peddlars, the frugality and cunning of the farmers, the haughtiness of the mercenaries. Once they came home with their richness and their magnanimity, and gave their silver coins out to the village people, just because they wanted to see the people's admiring facial expression. My grandfather was skilful in sex, and his loved wives lived in different places. Before the revolution he was a landowner. And after the revolution he, this cunning arsehole, became totally poor and won a name as "proletariat" by means of his opium pipe. O, Grandfather, your semen was spread everywhere, and you would never feel lonely after your death! You had so many descendants that you had been the main character in the old plays, and you could enjoy splendour in the delight of another world's ghosts.

My sisters, my brothers, let's take part in the opening of the drama under the disconsolate choral singing. Raise our grandfather's bones, and let the flame of death illuminate our way forward!

### **The death**

Thus, I save myself without seeing you. In the season when the plague circulates, I share little health with the sun. In the morning I see a picture of London in the fog, which is identical with what I have seen in my dream. Thousands of human being's facial expressions stream up to heaven - thousands of intricate colours. I wait for you; you, the messenger of the stars, come into the village of my dream behind three curtains. In the mild winter, the gloss of the gold coins flows, and the immortal value in the fairytale glitters. I interchange the cheap medicines, which I, with the morning-girl, have been puffing the whole night. It's nothing to do with my death, with the charitable admonitions. At night, before the picture of colourful heaven appears, I will see the gleam of the stars caress the butterflies, which hover about me.

O, the messenger of the stars, I have also played a part as a wanderer; in the homeless paradise we share with each other the slow time of despair.

The morning girl! What a fragmentary picture, like a scene in hell; the falling sun in the morning-girl's sad pupils mirrors a little boat, which sails shakingly in the secular billow. After I draw away the veil from life itself, I hear the noise of the rats during the plague, and the flame which burns London Bridge stream into my morning and shut me up. Girl, I need your salvation!

In the village of the dream behind three curtains I say farewell to the sunshine. Over my head the rattling of the steps shakes us up from the bed. Although the gentleness remains still in your eyes, and although the mysterious fragrance of the night is still about me, this colourful hell has covered us with a scornful mien.

### **The pregnant woman**

The pregnant woman is possessed by the Demon and sucks my marrow. The pregnant woman in the large truck bitterly looks back and stares at me with her hollow eyes. In the mirror there are two skeletons who embrace each other; the porcelain knocks at their bones like gloaming, and then all collapses with a brittle tone.

But in the pregnant woman's orbits, the Demon has refused me. In the middle of the bones I can hear the pendulum of the clock, and it makes the whole world stop; the skyscrapers become suddenly lopsided and flow in the ocean of the crowd. The slow-witted and indifferent pregnant woman, you are not moved at all; with your vigorous fertility, you have got the flying iron hovering everywhere in history. The frigid pregnant woman, what future has your suffering supplied?

In the narrow time and in the narrow space, where it was filled with the smoke and fog, the flies reform everything with their disorderly tracks. The stars double up and become a winding way in the dusk of the spring, when a dancing bird shows me the way to open a door behind which all the taboos forbidden by the deity were kept.

The cock dances! The pregnant woman finally sheds her historical tears. In my cramped brain there are everywhere the stiff realities, and only the realities...I have sold my two legs and my hands...in the mirror there are the friendly skeletons and the fresh candle...the mirror breaks to pieces and scatters over on the floor; the numerous evenings stream out down from my feet, the alphabet letters roll on the floor. I put my arms round her and say softly to her with a dry, false voice (I let it out anyway): this is the future, which is the end of all human beings, and it is not necessary to make a duplicate.

### **The fragment of the dream and the poem in the dream**

.....

O, the Heaven! O, the earth!

Truth and righteousness spurt everywhere  
and I have seen the death.

.....

Who can understand the meaning hidden therein?

The martyrs, the withered flower, the figures on the patterns. Go there, and approach it; through the sparkling drop of water, watch the dilapidated wall and the smooth surface of the gravestone, which is filled with the impressions of hands. To fall; to scream insanely. To kiss. The ice-cold moonlight glimmers on the bleak metal!

To eat and to drink, insanely! The blowing wind chases the woman's scream.

1<sup>st</sup> October-15<sup>th</sup> November, 1992

*(Translated by Jimbut)*

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**Ah Zhong**, pseudonym of LI Yunzhong, is a writer, poet, and member of ICPC. His works are banned in China, especially in his home town of Shanghai.

## **I am Standing Here Alone and Another**

*By AI Ge*

### **I am Standing Here Alone**

I am standing here alone  
Watching the sky shrink into a tiny black hole  
Bullet holes are left in the mid-night  
History is shrinking and emitting green smoke  
Handcuffs and chains are roaring---hand over  
Pen, conscience and your eyes

I am standing here alone  
Awaiting my body's bleeding  
If an extra rose is needed  
Please put my heart on as well  
Even if the icy-cold guns are questioning with bullets  
I will never kneel down to autocracy

I am standing here alone  
Those fallen down are all evidence  
Those alive are all witnesses  
Loneliness and death are unstoppable  
I want to leave a kiss on the forehead of truth  
Singing my lyrics in its arms

I am standing here alone  
But see flaming clouds floating  
Countless dynasties could not spell the words of the people  
It is a luxury to have a representative of them  
If there is a black spot in the sun  
I would like to single it out

I am standing here alone  
Not recognizing the shackles forced upon me  
Thoughts are my spiritual wealth  
Nobody could rob me of them



If one day you want to recruit rebels  
First give back freedom to people

### **The Longest Distance to Tagore**

The longest distance in the world  
Is not the origin of the universe  
Is not the disappearance of time

But from your eyes to your lips  
You find me but cannot say I love you

The longest distance in the world  
Is not from your eyes to your lips  
But from your lips to your heart  
You have uttered what your heart does not admit

The longest distance in the world  
Is not from your lips to your heart  
But from your heart to your life  
Your heart has admitted what your life has to wait for

The longest distance in the world  
Is not from your heart to your life  
But from your life to your soul  
Your life has belonged to me but your soul is still drifting

The longest distance in the world  
Is not from your life to your soul  
But from your soul back to your eyes  
Your soul has been captured by me but your eyes are fathomless

(Translated by Biao CHEN)

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**AI Ge** is a poet, writer and member of ICPC. He is now residing in Paris, France.

## **The Animal Farm and Others**

*By SHI Tao*

I am reading Solzhenitsyn's

*The Cancer Ward*

But living in Orwell's

*Animal Farm*.

The calf that tells the truth is dying.

On the oak of truth, a monkey is teaching people to read

A stranger, across his cloth, is

Stroking his skin in pathological changes.

A kindergarten kid is wondering

Why his head has not grown horns.

A passerby is grimly learning

To walk like an elephant.

A crocodile is helplessly watching a great fire

Having dried the pond where it was hiding.

The fruits irrelevant to each other

Are placed in the shops by the street.

But the mermaid who holds the prophecy

Is hiding on Mars

And warming herself by flaming-red stones.

### **Unorthodox Theory**

Paint a mad cow in colour,

To get passersby close to nature.

Make the statue of the Great Leader grow rabbit's ears

To let him hear the noises of protests every day.

Keep the beasts of prey and politicians

Together in the same cage.

Get Barbie to water the stairs

Let cigarettes run wild in women's lips.





Love is just a few words of the song  
Everybody Knows.  
Everybody that controls us  
Is just a blind light.

On the street, with anonymously delightful smells  
Nostalgic flesh rebels in suspicion against  
Desires, causing scars  
and producing waste in the body.

Let green reproduce the cry of a bird.  
If only this shriek from its trampled death could become  
A happy journey, to let Superman fear heights  
Observe my crime from a short distance.

## **The Pain**

The portrait on the wall lost its power of reflection.  
Wind blowing through the window could not prevent violence from occurring.  
I tormented you wildly for a whole night  
Until both of us reached complete exhaustion  
Like two kites left after rain.

I was once staring in a fairytale play.  
I was once waving my hands  
To teach children to sing.  
I was once, at moonlit night,  
Listening to two crows chatting.

But the truth of tyranny easily struck me down.  
Its pain lacked the tenderness of moonlight.  
I am struggling in an iron box full of lies,  
And trying hard to persuade myself to be a silent patient  
By swallowing a breath of anger into the heart of my homeland.

*(Translated by Yu ZHANG)*

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***SHI Tao**, a journalist, writer and poet, was sentenced to imprisonment for 10 years in 2005 for releasing a document of the Communist Party to an overseas Chinese democracy site after Yahoo! China provided his personal details to the Chinese government.*

## **Climbing Mount Qixia and Others**

*By YANG Tianshui*



The sky-high huge waves rush to the east,  
Where heroic Qixia Peak grows thousands of trees.  
The vast golden wind clears the jade sky;  
The huge green darkness enters one's chest.  
A half-inch red heart holds the world;  
A piece of royalty dares to face the grave.  
The innumerable sleeping lions will rise,  
And battle flags will set up everywhere in China.

*Fall, 1989*

### **Fall View**

Having a view of the fall plain in dark twilight,  
The mountains cannot help but let fog get heavy.  
Next morning the Jade Emperor will drive away the night,  
And hand out a red wheel of rising sun when ready.

1999-11

### **My Affection (extract)**

#### **Opening Words**

The high-walls are insensitive and indifferent  
And electrical fences across the sky, regardless of day and night  
Cut off the view of rivers, green willows and grains in the spring field  
And the hovering of free swan geese delivering letters.  
However, the bright moon refuses to be monopolized and manipulated  
By offering its light of affection equally to people all over world  
Its gently and amiably loving face is  
Drawing out infinite lovesickness and dreams

*Spring, 1999*

## **Spiritual Tours over Land of China (extract)**

1

The electrical fence and high wall  
quietly guard against all--  
the wilderness, far mountain and cloudy sky,  
in a prisoner's heart the constant universes lie.

The benefactions from spring rain and summer dew  
often moisten quiet hearts to grow.  
The smelting trials of autumn frost and winter snow  
draw the praised singing so.

In looking afar, in dream and in longing  
I went all over the vast land of China  
The beauty of hills and rivers, and compassion for everything  
expelled the worries that had disturbed public feeling.

The Creator's immeasurable grace  
offered China largesse  
such as painting and poetry  
such as brocade and embroidery.

*1997-01-14*

*(Translated by Yu ZHANG)*

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***YANG Tianshui***, pseudonym of YANG Tongyan, internet writer, member of the Independent Chinese PEN Center, recipient of its 2006 Writer in Prison Award and of PEN America Center's 2008 PEN/Barbara Goldsmith Freedom to Write Award, has been serving 12 years imprisonment since 23 December 2005 for "subverting the state power".

## **Year 1989 and Another**

*By DU Daobin*

### **17th of May**

Driven by the season  
May, exhausted May  
Is launching a challenge to doctrine  
By the street at the midnight  
You and I have been sitting and watching

The red sun falls west  
And the moon over our heads  
Is no longer full tonight  
Well aware of these  
We are still sitting  
By the street at midnight  
In May

I know your eyes are seeking  
And you know my heart is expecting  
Through a crack in the roof of a building  
You are seeking the light of a nova  
Across the curtain of night  
I am expecting the call of morning

### **18th of May**

In the place specified by history  
In the posture that holds your heads high  
You have shouted out in one breath  
The words suppressed in the chests of billions  
at the cost of your lives

### **Fourth of June**

Our voices shouting



High in the sky  
Have been joined by responses from the world  
But cannot touch  
The heart of a dictator

We are not under anyone's brand  
But just want to get rid of corruption  
To push the wheels of history  
While they are using tanks and bullets  
To stop our advance

When we kneeled down  
He took no notice  
When we took hunger strikes  
He had no feeling  
When we were going around campaigning  
He issued orders to the tanks in line  
And soldiers with machine guns waiting

He got these soldiers isolated  
From the world  
Shut into a cage  
And carefully fed them  
Only with their own saliva and false information  
Then he drove them with the whips  
Biting and tearing

### **5th of June**

I am dead  
I was unarmed when I died  
I took glorious death  
To declare eternal life

You are living on in degradation  
You shameful running dogs of the military  
Take your cues from tyranny  
To open the bolt of your guns

You are condemned by history

## **February**

February is the season when I begin  
The severe winter is left behind and ahead is the spring  
The seasonal wind has not blown away the haze  
The seed of longing  
Has not started budding

During day and night, feelings of tightness and chilliness  
Shroud my surroundings  
In order not to be swallowed by coldness  
I am pretending to dance tripping  
To feel the warmth  
I huddled within myself

A main road disappears behind  
The branch roads faces the wasteland  
My dear, who will guide me  
I do not want to turn back crying  
Nor dare to flinch

*1990-2-1*

*(Translated by Yu ZHANG)*

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**DU Daobin**, internet writer, Honorary Member of Sydney PEN Centre as well as ICPC member and recipient of its 2008 Writer in Prison Award, was sentenced to 3 years imprisonment with 4 years suspension on “inciting subversion of the state power” and so released on 11 June 2004 after 7 and half months detention, but re-imprisoned on 21 July 2008 to serve the remaining sentence of 2 years and 4 and half months.

## **The Worms and Another**

*By ZHENG Yihun*



The worms wriggle within lines of my poetry  
And slowly crawl out of word after word.  
The worms form a quiet advance group  
Trying to find out my feeling and my thought.  
A large troop of worms rushes here afterwards  
With the handcuffs, fetters, documents in red-orange-yellow-green-black-blue-violet  
And a warrant of arrest signed jointly by fragrant grass and flower.  
The worms want to take every piece of my poems  
And every volume of my works  
Because my eyes are said to be so poisonous  
As to trap the heart of every young girl.

The worms' court wants to sentence me to life imprisonment.  
My offence is that in the name of writing  
In making reckless funs of the worms  
I have plotted to subvert worms' value and status  
Regardless of their great role in plant phylogeny

## **Working for the Muse**

To work for a lifetime  
I will have neither complaint nor regret  
I will maintain such an attitude all my life  
To show my loyalty that will never be changed  
If the Muse tells me to go westward  
I will never go to the east  
If the Muse tells me to fail  
I will never make a success

If the Muse tells me to take up Chinese medicine  
I will run all over the wild hills  
To taste the sweetness and bitterness of life  
And experience the tenderness and happiness in tragedy and comedy



If the herbal soup I cook is offered for drinking  
China will become healthy, preserving its youth forever  
Even if it had a cancer  
The root cause of the ailment will be cured by 85%  
Even if it had a cold and fever  
The medicine will also be effective to cure sickness and restore a strong physique  
Running like wind and standing like a pine  
In a high-spirited manner  
To wait the arrival of foul wind and bloody rain in the future

Working for Muse  
I will not let my mistress down  
Who is the goddess of poetry  
A beauty in charge of art on Mount Olympus

Since she intends to hire me as her agent in China  
I must be cautious and conscientious day and night  
To pour rich and fertile blood from my heart onto wonderful verse and prose

*(Translated by Yu ZHANG)*

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**ZHENG Yichun**, ICPC honorary member, has been serving his 7 years imprisonment since 2004.

## **Farewell Turning Dreams into Ash and Another**

*By CAI Chu*



One lotus bud is rising above a wild pond,  
Tears are held back in its watery eyes.  
Used to watching white clouds flying at will,  
Its dreams, free to fly, are drowned in water.

No more dreamy perfection, no more grassy green,  
No more of her sadness, my heart is broken;  
The cold moon, hung atop the hills, couldn't be shaken down,  
Stars, coming through the straw roofs, couldn't be picked up.  
Like mountain mist, like haze, like night with lights,  
On trees cuckoos are singing absorbingly,  
Like floating, like anchoring, like the sun going down,  
People are languishing like the ancient voices of oceans.

No more listening to the playing of Suona,  
Today's farewell turned dreams into ash.

31<sup>st</sup> December, 2000

### **Waiting**

Picking up from the scarlet pool of blood,  
Collecting from the never-dying souls.  
Within a dark room,  
There lives my---waiting.

It's heavily silent, not a single word,  
Not a single tear, like my sadness.  
It's slow, not walking in a hurry,  
Not tired of bending each time, like my lingering.

Sometime it intrudes into my dream,  
Taking me over mountains, seas of clouds,  
To a strange and familiar place,  
The world of ultimate light.

But it doesn't like to walk out of the room  
To watch the clouds floating.  
It is silent and stubborn, it knows  
How to organise its own life.

Within the dark room,  
It holds back my hatred, my love,  
The outburst of my power  
And the burning of my blood.

Picking up from the scarlet pool of blood,  
Collecting from the never-dying souls.  
Within a dark room,  
There lives my---waiting.

April, 1976

*(Translated by Biao CHEN)*

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**CAI Chu**, born in 1945, was an underground poet during the Cultural Revolution, and moved to the USA in 1997. He is a founding member of ICPC and a well-known editor for a Chinese website.

## **Told and Another**

*By GAO Yu*



You told me that Vltava River flew here like crossing over a threshold  
And that here it is called Prague  
I told you that the river of Vltava had also washed Beijing  
And that it was already 2008

You told me that twenty years later, from Charles University's Academy of Sciences to Nation Street  
And that you had seen the enemy of freedom again  
I told you that the blood that dried on Tiananmen Square had come together with waves of the Vltava River  
And that it had been in full bloom with flowers of freedom

You told me that we were very small but that small dogs barked much  
I told you that the Great Wall was very long and high

You told me that you do not have a national flower  
But that when lilac was in full bloom you had exorcised the Nazi  
I told you that your national tree *Tilia cordata* was stalwart  
And that in the lilac season in Beijing it bloomed out with cup-shaped flowers

You told me that their fragrance was sweet  
I told you that they were really fragrant, really

## **Gaze**

**- To Anna Politkovskaya**

You were looking at me from behind the lens  
In the unparalleled Parliament Building  
The Senator kindheartedly invited me  
To inscribe your book in Czech  
Oleg Orlov was your compatriot  
You and I were colleagues

In late autumn 2006  
A tweeting bird fled through the sky over the world  
Dropping a silver-grey feather  
On the desk in every newsroom  
At the grand ceremony of the Courage Award in Los Angeles  
You were gazing at all the people there  
Your gray hair, your gaze  
Brought angry hearts, dripping tears (1).

Your honesty  
Continues to make the evils over the world tremble  
On the way sprinkled with your blood  
There has been more blood flowing for the sake of truth  
From within the electrical fences and high walls that had imprisoned me  
There have always been thinkers' poems titled out by birds

Meeting with you again  
I only had my hot gaze  
To kiss your cheeks  
And your slim shoulders  
Your faith is still flying in your Russia  
While my story is constantly to jump over China's Wall (2).

Notes:

(1) At IWFM awarding ceremony in 2006, there were postcards with Anna Politkovskaya's portrait on every table for the participants to send to Moscow.

(2) China has built up Internet firewalls to restrict the dissident writers' freedoms of speech and press.

*(Translated by Yu ZHANG)*

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*GAO Yu, freelance journalist and writer, was born in Chongqing, China, in 1944, and imprisoned twice before and after June Fourth massacre. She was elected the Honorary Director of Independent Chinese PEN Centre and adopted as the member of Czech PEN Centre in 2009.*

## **The Wound and Others**

**- To Tiananmen Mothers**

*By LIN Maochun*

The black and white eyes contrasted in sharpness  
Have been unable to distinguish between black and white.  
The variation of the world might  
Have made all the doctors feel greater helplessness.

The verse has attracted a breeze  
That will carefully release  
The bandage that has been wrapped tight  
In layers of a long night.

Oh, the wound is awake,  
Even to panic time with fright...  
The tears have revealed the daybreak,  
And pain will eventually bloom into delight!

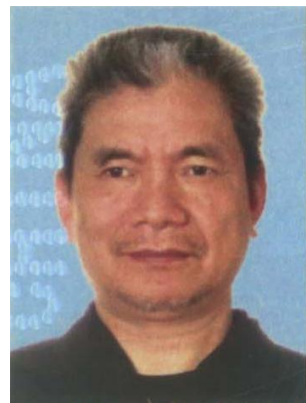
### **Human and Nature**

Humanity, the rich species, is thriving in harmony,  
But is shocked repeatedly by the decline of other species.  
When the last drop of water on earth would be left to a tear,  
The final extinction of all species would in turn be no humanity.

### **Commemoration of Tao Yuanmin: A Pioneer in Environmental Protection of Landscape**

My heart is following the homeward birds  
And I am elegantly drunk in Taoyuan County.  
Pursuing the dream into utopia  
I have leisurely realized its mysterious beauty.

*(Translated by Yu ZHANG)*



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***LIN Maochun**, penname Chunjian (Spring Stream), is poet and essayist, born in 1948 in Yong-an County, Fujian Province. He started publishing his poetry, prose, fiction and other small literary works in 1972 and joined the Writers Association of Fujian Province in 1982 and the China Poetry Society in 1996. He was a teacher of creative writing and an editor at various literary magazines. He joined Independent Chinese PEN Center in 2009.*

## **Presently as I confront prison walls**

*By TENG Biao*

Now I write this poem for you, my Love, my Lady, my Wife.  
Even tonight, the stars glitter in the cold sky of apparent isolation.  
Glowworms appear and disappear among the shrubs.



Please explain to our child why I did not have a chance  
to bid her farewell. I was compelled to embark on a long journey away from home.  
And so, everyday before our daughter goes to bed,  
And when she awakes in the morning,  
I will entrust to you, my Lady, my Love, my Wife:  
I entrust to you, my warm kisses on our daughter's cheeks.

Please let our child touch the herbs beneath the stockade.  
In the morning on a beautiful sunlit day,  
If she notices the dew on the leaves,  
She will experience my deep love for her.

Please play the Fisherman's Song every time you water the cloves.  
I should be able to hear the song, my love.  
Please take good care of our silent but happy goldfish.  
Hidden in their silence are memories of my glamorous and turbulent youth.

I tread a rugged road,  
But let me reassure you: I have never stopped singing, my Love.  
The leaves of the roadside willow tree have gradually changed colour.  
Some noises of melting snow approach from afar.

Noises are engulfed in silence. This is just a very simple night.  
When you think of me, please do not sigh, my Love.  
The torrents of my agonies have merged with the torrents of my happiness.  
Both rivers now run through my mortal corpse.

Before the drizzle halts,  
I would have returned to your side, my Lady.  
I cannot dry your tears while I am drenched in rain;



I can do so only with a redeemed soul after these times of testing.

(I wrote this on 7 March 2008, on the second day after I lost my freedom. At that time, I was not sure how long I needed to stay in jail before I would be released. So I simply treated it as my home. I meditated in front of the walls, practiced my writing and composed some poetry. I initially wrote this on a piece of paper, which was confiscated by the guard. I was released in the afternoon of 8 March 2008. That evening I wrote this down from memory. Until now, I still have no idea where I was “jailed”.)

*(Translated by Catherine A. Yeung)*

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**TENG Biao**, born in 1973, is a member of Independent Chinese PEN Center and the legal consultant of its Writers in Prison Committee, prominent human rights lawyer and a lecturer at China University of Political Science and Law in Beijing. He received the Gleitsman Foundation’s Award of Achievement in 2003 and the French Republic’s Human Rights Prize in 2007.

## **Travel of the Wind and Another**

*By MA Shaofang*



I am gazing at a leaf; my eyes are full of feelings for her.

Perhaps wrong. The wild winds belonging to myself also belong to lost directions,  
Belong to the sadness of temptations to that leaf amongst wild whistling and unease.

I am running wildly, letting the winds slap my tender figure and my lingering thoughts.

Perhaps wrong. Unyielding steps walk in a hurry onto a hopeless narrow bridge,  
Into a wild winter surrounded by roaring sounds and fearful ghosts.

Perhaps wrong. I missed the retreating shuttle bus in the golden season,  
Missed the final curtain call at the orange stage amidst thunderous applause.

I am tired. Holding tightly the lonely fallen leaves and escaping into a windless corner...

December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1988

### **Outside of the Prison**

1. It was a long time ago. That was a sunny autumn with forceful winds and mature colors. On the road, someone was singing the most popular song of that year, as they went into the depth of dusk against the setting sun.

I could not go back to the old days.

In the street, a bride in a white suit was leaning on the shoulder of her bridegroom. Before a fashion shop window she was gazing at a male model in a black suit. What did she lose?

From whom can I get answer? From whom can I get answer?

2. Someone was thrown into the dark cell. He began his cold feels and touches. All walls were filled with bullet holes. The bloody smell stuck to his hands. He sat on the floor, allowing the ghostly eyes to climb out of the corners.

Someone was outside, peeping into the darkness.

There were some random memories; what was forgotten was my own panic. The past humiliations were interrogated at every step. That thunderous dullness was the cell of all darkness...

Squatting in darkness  
I could only see darkness  
And greetings from darkness

3. Turn all my time to poetry. Using dull eyes to challenge endless and disordered days, or lying in the cradle of death, with fingers pointing weakly to the scorching sun: the vagrancy on the wave, the naivety in the drawings, those sweetest kisses in childhood and first love.

I was fascinated, and so I  
Could not forget the shadow outside.

Under the sun, I leaned against the tree with its huge shade covering my shadow. But lingering and hesitation, huge melancholy came to surround me from all directions far away. I seemingly heard a voice, at the bottom of my heart, singing to the rhythm of melancholy.

What I lost is freedom  
What I got is freedom

4. Come inside. Within the dimness and loneliness, draw with finger a picture of an executioner on the wall, until the bleeding heart breathes together with a butcher's knife, and redness prevails against darkness...

I did not fall down  
I began to wander again  
Black hair just like a sail on my head  
Over the black sea  
From dark night to dark night

No navigation light, nor navigator

I may have been approaching a hopeless island with a mixture of coldness, selfishness and

brutality...I made a loud shout through the window: “Go! Go away from this era! ”

Everything outside was awakened .

June, 1990

*(Translated by Biao CHEN)*

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***MA Shaofang**, born in 1964, is one of the 21 student leaders who were wanted for arrest due to the June 4<sup>th</sup> Democratic Movement. He is now residing in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province.*

## **Consciousness and Struggles and Others**

*By YANG Yinbo*



No longer the world of Buddha, Christ and Islam  
Everywhere are believers in goods, science and technology and power  
And I would rather cut off my protruding head  
Than stay among them for a second.

Out of all that is gained, what is not deserved will be handed out  
For all not gained, a deserved portion will be provided  
"Fairness" will gradually become clear  
Those twisted will be set straight  
Those nihilistic will get possessions

Those doomed to dissipate will inevitably dissipate  
Those cruel and ferocious suppressions beyond description  
Will be re-considered at our return  
Those destined to come will inevitably come  
All spirits not dying within these 5,000 years  
Will eventually stop waning for the sake of their sacred missions

As if I see the near future:  
Truth will eventually clear up all lies  
Freedom will eventually clear up all evils  
I try to place the last hope  
On one hundred years of struggle to prove

In the face of the constantly changing universe  
I expand my heart as large as the whole world  
The sun and the moon are drifting in the dark blue ocean  
Trees are growing tall, and birds fly together  
Mountains and rivers will never change  
Love and hatred are still the same as before  
Starry insects are flying in the sky, and life is vast and far-reaching

2002

## **Life**

Tonight I will go to sleep in blood,  
With the sound of ignorant mixers,  
With the fighting wills which haven't been suppressed for a century.  
Sleep in the blood of tonight.

Tonight I will go back to the long-separated dead city,  
Stand in the dark barricades shouting aloud  
Stand in the strong-guarded trench charging attacks.  
Fight to death in the blood of tonight.

I gamble with my whole life,  
Holding weapons in the blood;  
I drive my violent combat tank,  
Having already seen the sacrifices of life.

I want the wild fire to burn the frozen hearts,  
Smash the long-stiff bodies;  
I want burning blood to break through the wooden coffins that hold millions of years of  
remains,  
To wake up the people in five centuries' time

*2003*

## **Dreams Will not Perish**

I was searching in a lot of blood,  
Looking for shaking sobs,  
Looking for fearful suffocations.  
Under the knives,  
So many people hate power

I am breathing with you  
Waves of awakened righteousness,  
Tides of the public's fighting opinions.  
Under the tyranny,

So many people march to victory!

This is our burning blood,  
Not their machine!  
Th our lives,  
Not their slaves!

They told me to bow  
They told me to suffer  
They are criminals,  
Ruthless killers!

If you can't see me again one day,  
If we had once fought together,  
Let the voices of our immortal dreams  
Echo forever in the vast sky of history.

2004

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***YANG Yinbo**, born in Chongqing, China, is a writer, poet and social activist. In 2003, he joined ICPC and became its youngest member.*

## ***A Brief of Independent Chinese PEN Centre***

*Independent Chinese PEN Center (ICPC) is a nongovernmental, nonprofit and nonpartisan organization beyond borders based on free association of those who write, edit, translate, research and publish literature work in Chinese and dedicated to freedom of expression for the workers in Chinese language and literature, including writers, journalists, translators, scholars and publishers over the world. ICPC is a member organization of International PEN, the global association of writers dedicated to freedom of expression and the defence of writers suffering governmental repression. Through the worldwide PEN network and its own membership base in China and abroad, ICPC is able to mobilize international attention to the plight of writers and editors within China attempting to write and publish with a spirit of independence and integrity, regardless of their political views, ideological standpoint or religious beliefs.*

*ICPC was founded in 2001 by a group of Chinese writers in exile and in China, including its founding President LIU Binyan, a prominent author, journalist and activist who passed away in exile in USA on Dec. 5 2005, Vice-president and author ZHENG Yi, Executive Director and poet BEI Ling and Freedom to Write Committee Coordinator and poet MENG Lang, all of whom have been in exile in USA. In November of same year, ICPC was approved as a chapter of the International PEN at its annual congress in London. Since then, ICPC has made vigorous efforts to promote and defend the freedom of writing and publication and the free flow of information in China, and been deeply concerned about the state of civil society and open discourse there.*

*In September and October, 2009, ICPC held its Fourth Internet Congress of the Membership Assembly to have elected 5 Board members and 2 alternates to fill its vacancies, including the President Tienchi MARTIN-LIAO (Germany) and 2 Vice-presidents Patrick POON (Hong Kong) and QI Jiazhen (Australia). The past president Dr. LIU Xiaobo, who has been imprisoned since December 8, 2008, was elected Honorary President.*