

ALMOST ISLAND

Contributors: Winter 2009

Irwin Allan Sealy was born in 1951 and lives in Dehradun. He is the author of five novels and a travel book, *From Yukon to Yucatan*. His most recent fiction, *Red: An Alphabet*, concerns painting.

María Negroni was born in Argentina. She holds a PhD in Latin American Literature (Columbia University, New York). She has published numerous books of poetry: *de tanto desolar* (Tierra Firme, Buenos Aires 1985), *per/canta* (Tierra Firme, Buenos Aires 1989), *La aula bajo el trapo* (Tierra Firme, Buenos Aires 1991; Editorial Cuarto Propio, Santiago de Chile 1998), *Islandia* (Monte Avila Editores, Caracas 1994), *El viaje de la noche* (Editorial Lumen, Barcelona 1994), *Diario Extranjero* (Ediciones La Pequeña Venecia, Caracas 2000; Maison des Ecrivains Etrangers, St.Nazaire 2001); *Camera delle Meraviglie* (Quaderni della Valle, Italia 2002), *La ineptitud* (Editorial Alción, Córdoba 2002) and *Arte y Fuga* (Editorial Pre-Textos 2004). *Islandia* and *Night Journey* have appeared in English by Station Hill Press (2000) and Princeton University Press (2002) respectively. She has also published three books of essays: *Ciudad Gótica* (Bajo la Luna Nueva, Rosario 1994, second edition 2007), *Museo Negro* (Grupo Editorial Norma, Buenos Aires 1999), and *El Testigo Lúcido* (Beatriz Viterbo Editoras, Rosario 2003), as well as two novels *El sueño de Ursula* (Editorial Planeta/Seix Barral, Buenos Aires 1998) and *La Anunciación* (Seix-Barral, Buenos Aires 2007), and a book-object, Buenos Aires Tour, in collaboration with Argentine artist Jorge Macchi. She has translated several poets from French and English. Her book *La Pasión del Exilio*, which includes ten American women poets of the 20th Century has just been published by Bajo la luna, Buenos Aires 2007. She has also translated Louise Labé (Sonetos, Lumen, Barcelona, 1998); Valentine Penrose (Hierba a la Luna y otros poemas, Ediciones Angria, Caracas 1995); Georges Bataille (Lo arcangélico, Fundarte, Caracas 1995), H.D. (Helena en Egipto, Ediciones Angria, Caracas 1994); Charles Simic (Totemismo y otros poemas, Alción, Córdoba 2000), and Bernard Noël (Contra-muerte y otros poemas, Alción, Córdoba 2004) and edited *La morada imposible* (containing Susana Thénon's work, Corregidor Buenos Aires 2005, and *La Maldad de Escribir*, an Anthology of 20th Century Latin American Women Poets, Editorial Igitur, Barcelona 2005. Her poems, essays and translations have been widely published in literary magazines in Spain, Latin America and the US, such as *Diario de Poesía* and *Página 12* (Argentina), *Hora de Poesía*, *Revista Atlántica* and *El signo del gorrión* (España), *La Jornada Semanal* and *Mandorla* (México) and *The Paris Review*, *Circumference*, *Lumina* and *Bomb* (New York).

María Negroni has received several fellowships: a Guggenheim Foundation (1994), a Rockefeller Foundation (1998), the Fundación Octavio Paz (2001), The New York Foundation for the Arts (2005), and the Civitella Ranieri Foundation (2007). Her book *Islandia* received the PEN Award for best book of poetry in translation, New York 2001. She currently teaches Latin American Literature at Sarah Lawrence College.

Michelle Gil-Montero has an MFA in Poetry from The University of Iowa Writers' Workshop. Her translations of Latin American poetry have appeared recently in *Jacket*, *Conjunctions*, *Cipher*, *eXchanges*, and others, and her poetry has been published in recent issues of *Colorado Review*, *Third Coast*, and *Cincinnati Review*. She lives in Pittsburgh and teaches creative writing at Saint Vincent College.

Meena Alexander's books of poetry include *Illiterate Heart* which won the PEN Open Book Award, *Raw Silk* and the recently published *Quickly Changing River*. She is the author of the memoir *Fault Lines*. Her reflections on poetry, migration and memory *Poetics of Dislocation* is forthcoming in 2009 from the University of Michigan Poets on Poetry Series. Currently she is working on a cycle of poems based on drawings made by children from Darfur, in the aftermath of violence. She is Distinguished Professor of English at Hunter College and the Graduate Center at the City University of New York and a 2008 Guggenheim Fellow in Poetry.

Nandita Haksar was a journalist before her involvement in the women's rights movement forced her to take to law. For the past twenty-five years she has worked as a human rights lawyer, campaigner and writer. She has set many precedents in human rights and refugees law. She has taken up cases in the courts in India as well as appearing before international courts and committees. She has evolved and taught courses on human rights in various universities.

Haksar's publications include: *Demystification of Law for Women* (1986); the book has been translated into regional languages and extensively used by women's groups for spreading legal literacy; *Nagaland File: A Question of Human Rights*. The book first exposed the human rights violations being committed by the Indian security forces in the North East of India; *Framing Geelani, Hanging Afzal: Patriotism in the Time of Terror* (2007) in which she writes about her experience of defending two Kashmiri Muslims accused of attacking the Indian Parliament, and *Rogue Agent: How India's Military Intelligence Betrayed the Burmese Resistance* (forthcoming, Penguin 2009).

K.Satchidanandan is one of the pioneers of modern poetry in Malayalam. He has twenty-two collections of poetry, and several collections of critical essays and interviews. He also has three collections of essays in English. He was Professor of English at Christ College, University of Calicut, Kerala, and editor of *Indian Literature*, the journal of the Sahitya Akademi (The National Academy of Letters) and later its Chief Executive. He lives in New Delhi.

Vahni Capildeo (b. Trinidad, 1973) works freelance as a research assistant for The Oxford English Dictionary and a Contributing Editor at The Caribbean Review of Books. Her poetry includes: *No Traveller Returns* (Salt, 2003); *Person Animal Figure* (Landfill, 2005); *The Undraining Sea and Dark and Unaccustomed Words* (Eggbox, forthcoming). Individual poems have been published in various magazines and anthologies such as The Oxford Book of Caribbean Verse. This year she is hoping to concentrate on prose (fiction and non-fiction) and to finish a further poetry collection, *Utter*, on the theme of 'Monolithicity'. Interests have included: martial arts; yoga; historical gardens and herbs.

Vivek Narayanan is Co-Editor of *Almost Island*. He was born in India to Tamil-speaking parents and grew up in Zambia. He did undergraduate and graduate work in the United States, taught at the University of Kwazulu-Natal in Durban, South Africa, and moved back to India in 2000. His first book of poems, *Universal Beach*, was published in 2006. A new, revised [US edition](#) of that book was published in 2011, and a second volume, *Mr. Subramanian*, is also forthcoming. Some of Narayanan's poems and short stories can be sampled online at places like [The International Literary](#)

[Quarterly](#), [Pratilipi](#), [Agni](#), [Manchester Review](#), [Blackbox Manifold](#), and elsewhere, as well as offline in recent anthologies like *The Bloodaxe Book of Contemporary Indian Poetry* and *Language for a New Century: Contemporary Poetry from the Middle East, Asia, and Beyond* (W.W. Norton).

Ravi Shankar is Associate Professor and Poet-in-Residence at Central Connecticut State University and the founding editor of the international online journal of the arts, [Drunken Boat](#). He has published a book of poems, *Instrumentality* (Cherry Grove), named a finalist for the 2005 Connecticut Book Awards, and with Reb Livingston, a collaborative chapbook, *Wanton Textiles* (*No Tell Books*, 2006). He has taught at Queens College, University of New Haven, and Columbia University, where he received his MFA in Poetry. He currently serves on the Advisory Council for the Connecticut Center for the Book, reviews poetry for the Contemporary Poetry Review, has been a commentator on NPR and BBC, and along with Tina Chang and Nathalie Handal, he edited *Language for a New Century: Contemporary Poetry from Asia, the Middle East & Beyond* (W.W Norton & Co., 2008). In all likelihood, he is more isthmus than island.