

A photograph of a concrete sidewalk. A long, dark, bloody trail leads from the bottom left towards the center. At the end of the trail is a small, crushed yellow and white object, possibly a cigarette or a small container. The concrete is light gray with some darker patches and a visible expansion joint.

post hope

geneva chao

post hope
a partial history

Geneva Chao

Locofo Chaps

Chicago 2017

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Locofo Chaps is dedicated to publishing politically-oriented poetry.

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“Relative Hysteria” and “Possible Remedies” appeared in *Gravel* in February 2017.

November 8, 2016

in the moments before the
truck slides off the road
off the side into snow
into a tree no one believes
in trajectory – time slowing
to underwater

how many streams of
words and pictures of
blue and red on maps can
tell us this-that-is-inevitable,
when we believe nothing
is inevitable

but the heavings of our
own breath, but the
swelling of lungs for
a whoop of delight and
of victory, what we told
our children. inevitable

you are going to see
the world made right,
somehow, we said,
something about all this
is justice. something about
this is good.

November 9, 2016

My brown arms
in the sunlight,
sinew and bone,

I never
felt unwelcome
in this country on
this ocean

until the day
this referendum
rolls in

my name has
fallen off the
list of things

to observe

my body has
ceased its
usefulness

January 29, 1963

When my parents
married straight out of high school,

seventeen states
prohibited their fucking.

In California my father breached
my mother's *hymen imperforatus*

and was additionally lucky
to be breaking no particular

laws, but the old men
on the streets by the Marina

still crowed at each other
to look at the lady with the Jap,

and my mother still hid her ring
in her pocket. Now people

on buses and in box stores
are yelling at us that

we are animals, that we
are racist against whiteness, that

their lives have been devalued
by the focus on ours. Do they not

see how desperately we envy them
their safety?

March 27, 1980

Carter, Cooper, Anderson,
Holman, Alport, Brown:
these are my classmates
whose mothers have
perfect helmets of
frost and tip and make
perfect chocolate
cookies. The secret is
Crisco. We don't have
Crisco at our house.
We have lentils and
carob chips. We have
soy sauce and hot mustard.
We are not from
around here

You have such a
big heart, one of the
helmets praises my mother.
My mother waits
for the punchline.
Adopting the refugee
children, the helmet
persists. It's so good
of you to raise them
as your own. I see my
mother's 3000 mile move
eight months pregnant with me
flash before her eyes
What is there
for her to
say but thanks.

September 16, 1987

You could be walking
as a child having
played a little hooky

you could see a man
with a bald head and
an armband.

You could not
know he would grab you
and rattle your teeth
against a wall

or that after his bus
carried him away
your teeth would
shake still.

You would not imagine
for your own child
it would all happen
again.

November 10, 2016

when I told you
it would be all
right did I know
I was lying?

Relative Hysteria

everyone plumbs to the
depth of their possible
worries, worry being

always an economy of
scale, the scale adjusted
to each set, so your

pimples become worlds
just as my lawsuits
and her cancers

my friends are concerned
about their daughters'
future uterine freedoms

when the time will be ripe for
such freedoms to be exercised

and having enjoyed strenuous
use of my own
I understand

the uterus of your daughter must
remain unimpeded
because you are not concerned

about your immigration review
about your disabled niece
about your cousin's PO
about your son's OII
about your parents in Mexico

no longer able to come home

I raise the flag
of your daughter's future life
of your current anguish

I button up my own
to call you ally

Things I've Vomited Since Nov. 9, 2016 (1/20/2017)

Things that I've vomited since Nov. 9, 2016 include my breakfast on Nov. 10, 2016, which was the first day I attempted to eat breakfast; include three chocolate chip cookies that I baked before I realized my gorge was still rising, and which came out like play-dough, one pliable lump; include Thanksgiving dinner, with its dry turkey and greasy dressing, its mashed potatoes dripping with gravy and melted butter; include the McDonald's Sriracha burger I was furnished in desperation one workaday noon; include 17 har gow I ate between mealtimes the Saturday following the election; include one boat ride across the Pacific in 1948 and one boat ride across the Atlantic in 1610 (or thereabouts); include two pieces of ice cream cake I baked to celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday; include a deluxe shrimp burrito and fourteen corn chips with tomatillo salsa purchased from the taqueria off Mission and washed down with a glass bottle of startlingly fizzy mineral water; include the deed to my parents' first house in Alexandria, Virginia; include the Supreme Court ruling that made their marriage legal across the country shortly before; include three plates of fettucine alfredo provided to me at a church volunteer luncheon; include the body of Christ and the bread of heaven available on condition of credulity; include the mothers' milk I had supplied to my daughter for two years; include six mini quiche Florentines and a half-glass of California chardonnay, thrust into my hand by a fellow room parent at the PTA soiree; include seventeen tumbleweeds that blew down my throat during a visit to Manzanar Relocation Camp; include the garlic bread my son made for dinner on Dec. 3; include my father's required signature on my mother's first credit card application; include six mini frozen cream puffs from the Boy Scout Awards Dinner dessert table; include a quart of potato salad somebody

left to dry up like a raisin in the sun; include the memory of my father's being fired from his job for talking back; include two individual serving size containers of vanilla flavored Greek yogurt with live and active cultures; include thirteen postcards from a boy who wanted to date me in 1998; include two orders of Animal Style fries from the Culver City In-N-Out Burger; include my wedding ring, my engagement ring, and my unborn children; include three Boston Crème doughnuts and a half-cup of lukewarm coffee; include my willingness to walk down the street after dark; include my children's birth certificates, ages, and names; include a fibrous and bloody half-stem of Chinese broccoli and its attendant oyster sauce; include my grandfather's broken English; include a six-pack of Kozy Shack tapioca; include my son's freedom, include my daughter's safety; include the shreds of ragged meat around my heart and possibly my heart itself

Possible Remedies for America

Possible remedies for the inflammation
include a bottle of Advil
with breakfast. It's perfectly ok
to exceed the recommended
dosage, I checked, don't worry
about the fine print;

Possible remedies for the bruising
include ice packs or
maybe a walk-in, which is
available at the local grocery
where they are now hiring American
because it's your lucky day;

Possible remedies for the absence
include remembering
that all of us are as equal
as we act and you should maybe
shore up your routine
and quit complaining;

Possible remedies for the pain
include whiskey with Adderall
chasers, nationalist rally cries,
a renewed commitment to
contact sports practiced only
on American soil;

Possible remedies for the grief
include not remembering,
not looking, not wanting
to know.

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2017

Eileen Tabios – *To Be An Empire Is To Burn*

Charles Perrone – *A CAPacious Act*

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Gabriel Gudding – *Bed From Government*

mLEKAL aND – *Manifesto of the Moment*

Garin Cycholl – *Country Musics 20/20*

Mary Kasimor – *The Prometheus Collage*

Iars palm – *case*

Reijo Valta – *Truth and Truthmp*

Andrew Peterson – *The Big Game is Every Night*

Romeo Alcala Cruz – *Archaeoteryx*

John Lowther – *18 of 555*

Jorge Sánchez – *Now Sing*

Alex Gildzen — *Disco Naps & Odd Nods*

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Luisa A. Igloria – *Puñeta: Political Pilipinx Poetry, vol. 3*

Tom Bamford – *The Gag Reel*

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Travis Macdonald – *How to Zing the Government*

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Martha Deed – *We Should Have Seen This Coming*

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Freke Räihä – *Explanation model for 'Virus'*
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John Bloomberg-Rissman – *In These Days of Rage*
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Dan Ryan – *Swamp Tales*
Sheri Reda – *Stubborn*
Christine Stoddard — *Chica/Mujer*
Aileen Ibardaloza, Paul Cassinetto, and Wesley St. Jo – *No Names*
Nicholas Michael Ravnika – *Liberal elite media rag. SAD!*
Mark Young – *The Waitstaff of Mar-a-Largo*
Howard Yosha – *Stop Armageddon*
Andrew and Donora Rihn – *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*
Reshmi Dutt-Ballerstadt – *Extreme Vetting*
Michael Dickel – *Breakfast at the End of Capitalism*
Tom Hibbard – *Poems of Innocence and Guilt*
Eileen Tabios (ed.) – *Menopausal Hay(na)ku For P-Grubbers*
Aileen Casinnetto – *Tweet*
Melinda Luisa de Jesús – *Defying Trumplandia*
Carol Dorf – *Some Years Ask*
Marthe Reed – *Data Primer*
Carol Dorf – *Some Years Ask*
Amy Bassin and Mark Blickley – *Weathered Reports: Trump Surrogate Quotes From the Underground*
Nate Logan – *Post-Reel*
Jared Schickling – *Donald Trump and the Pocket Oracle*

Luisa A. Igloria – *Check & Balance*

Alik Barnstone – *So That They Shall Not Say, This Is Jezebel*

Geneva Chao – *post hope*

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