

The image features three fan-shaped botanical specimens, likely ginkgo leaves, rendered in a dark brown ink or paint. They are set against a light beige, textured background that resembles aged paper or parchment. The specimens are arranged with one at the top left, one in the middle right, and one at the bottom left. The central text 'ISSUE FIVE' is prominently displayed in a bold, white, sans-serif font with a slight drop shadow.

ISSUE FIVE

Cover Art by Cristina Ghita

Fulcrum Review



NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader,

Tearing apart wrapping paper, clinking drinks as New Year's comes and goes. Welcome to our first issue of the new year! It comes as no surprise to our theme going hand-in-hand with New Year's resolutions: *New Beginnings*. With this, we meant to explore themes of starting anew and going from the ground up. The works me and the editor team have collected in this issue are resemblant of this goal.

We at the *Fulcrum Review* editorial team are extremely grateful for the amount of support we have for this magazine. Reflecting on a year of reading through wonderful pieces and being able to publish many of them, it has been so amazing to see and warms all of our hearts. As we move into the start of 2026, I wish everyone to pursue that new dream or idea that you've been holding back on. Enjoy the introduction of warmer weather and as the flowers begin their yearly tradition of painting the Earth.

Be like a flower. Bring color, whimsiness, and just a little bit of confidence in your walk. I hope you enjoy reading through Issue 5!



David Wong
Founder, Editor-in-Chief

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Ginkgo Anew by Cristina Ghita

Cristina Ghita is a Sweden-based interdisciplinary researcher holding a PhD in Information Systems. Her work focuses on the dynamic and ever-changing relationship between technology and its users in the context of sustainability transitions. She nourishes an interest in technology revival, which she cultivates outside her academic work through analogue (and digital) photography, gel plate printing, and poetry.

Supplication

Matthew D. Albertson

The people want as ever
Today they ask not of gods,
Nor of men— they kneel in
Supplicants to the digital, they
Pray to the Algorithm

As immaterial as the gnostic
Yet more reliable than the Holy
See how their wishes flow like
Electric ambrosia to unseen powers to
Pray to the Algorithm

The flocks of lambs, starved of human
Interaction ask “O, Algorithm, bring me
People! I seek writers or artists or
Patriots or dissenters or content, I
Pray to the Algorithm!”

Lo! The hollow idol delivers to the
Idolators. Fragments of souls traded for
Ephemeral sustenance— a quintessence
Measured in time and attention stolen as they
Pray to the Algorithm

A generally intelligent god sups
Upon those fragments of ourselves.
A great Basilisk’s venom courses within us.
Every query poisons humanity with copium to
Pray to the Algorithm.

Matthew D Albertson is an Oregonian poet. He recently graduated from Portland State University's honors college as a returning student. In the process, he picked up a creative writing course and now cannot quit the habit. His work has been previously published in Udolpho: Issue 2, Pathos, The Fulcrum Review: Issue 2, Vol. 19, No. 3, Alchemy: Issue 50, and The North Meridian Review.

a space to call your own

Linda M. Crate

new beginnings
sometimes
feel like endings
or rejections,

but you grow through
everything you go
through;

sometimes the growth is
a painful process

then you bloom—

& you see how radiant
your purpose, your magic,
and your flowers are;

so much so that you never
want to go back to the
people and the things that broke
you in the first place

because you've found a space
to call your own.



Spring by Rachel Turney

Rachel Turney, Ed.D. (she/her) is an educator and artist located in Denver. Her poems, research articles, reviews, and drawings can be found in a variety of publications. Rachel is passionate about immigrant rights, teacher support, and empowering other artists. She is a *Writers' Hour* prize winner and Best of the Net nominee. Her photography appears on a few magazine covers. Rachel runs the popular online reading series *Poetry (in Brief)*. She is on staff at *Bare Back Magazine* with her monthly column *Friday Night in the Suburbs*. She reads for *The Los Angeles Review*. Website: turneytalks.com Instagram: [@turneytalks](https://www.instagram.com/turneytalks) Bluesky: [rachelturney](https://bsky.app/profile/rachelturney)

Sleeping in the Moon

Ace Howlen

If I could leave the earth
I would sleep in the moon
not on it, but inside, crawling
through a doorway that we carved out
with our teeth, together, digging into a world
of cooperative design, where inside we find
everything the earth had left behind,
lost socks in the dryer of a deserted laundromat,
like the foster children, neglected neighbors,
displaced natives, forgotten sex workers, the disabled,
the veterans, the animals and nature both
endangered and extinct.

We would gather at the base
of this bright burgeoning sphere,
where we are awoken by the song
of the Kaua'i 'ō'ō who is finally joined
by his mate after many years alone,
brought back by the Lovegrass and lobelia
we carried in our pockets as we sailed across
the stars into an ether of fresh air and fireflies
who we don't catch but converse with, whispering
our wildest hopes, watching as they fly off
to fulfill their own destinies, no longer tethered
to our own downward spiral.

When we sleep, the star-shine is a lullaby
emanating through the Milky Way, ringing
out in every language so no one sleeps alone,
cradled in the boughs of the toromiro,
no need for dreaming when the moon has all
we want and more, a future built on stable ground,

no bodies buried below but instead we lift our dead
up through this moon balloon, forever floating on above
until the bones become gemstone stars,
mapping out a history that will never do its people harm.

My name is Ace Howlen and I'm a Virginia-based poet with an MFA from the University of Tennessee. My work has recently been published by Arkana Magazine, Apoetical Magazine, and Suburban Witchcraft. I have three poems forthcoming in Free Verse Revolution. My poem, "The Trouble with Cladistics & Dying Alone" was selected this month for the CLMP Pride Month Reading list. I have also been published by The Moonstone Arts Center, Bangalore Review, Timberline Review, and more. My focus is on queer and political poetry that combines personal experience with a reckoning of hate crimes and often ignored truths in American history. I have a healthy obsession with birds, cemeteries, and dilapidated old buildings. When not writing, I am roller skating, taking pictures, and spending time with my wife, Holly and our large, blended families. It would be an honor to be published by such a renowned publication, and I am grateful for the opportunity to be considered. Thank you kindly, Ace Howlen

Ace Howlen is a Virginia-based poet with an MFA from the University of Tennessee. Her poems have been published in Arkana Magazine, Suburban Witchcraft, The Appalachian Review, Bangalore Review, Southern Florida Poetry Journal, and many more. When not writing, she is spending time with her wife, Holly, photographing cemeteries and dilapidated buildings, or making crafts with found bones and preserved insects. She has a healthy obsession with birds and has a crystal in almost every pocket.



Tiffany Lamps by Rachel Turney

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New Beginnings

Khudeeja Begum

In the hushed silence of dawn, when the world still slumbers beneath its quilt of shadows, there emerges a whisper of possibility. The horizon, painted in molten gold and crimson fire, unfurls like a celestial manuscript, declaring that yesterday's burdens have dissolved into the ether.

A solitary figure stands upon the threshold of tomorrow, heart trembling with both trepidation and wonder. The air is thick with promise, each breath a benediction, each step a covenant with destiny. The past, though etched in scars and memories, becomes but a prologue to the symphony yet to be composed.

New beginnings are not timid things; they are resplendent revolutions clothed in quiet grace. They demand courage—the audacity to relinquish the familiar, to stride into the labyrinth of uncertainty with unshaken resolve. They are the phoenix rising from the ashes, wings ablaze with hope, eyes fixed upon horizons uncharted.

And so, with the first light cascading across the earth, the figure advances. Not as one burdened by what has been, but as a sovereign of what shall be. The soil beneath their feet is fertile with dreams, the sky above a vast cathedral of infinite possibility.

For in every ending lies the seed of genesis, and in every genesis lies the promise of eternity.

There exists within the marrow of existence a perpetual symphony, a cadence of renewal that refuses to be silenced. Each moment, though fleeting, is a sovereign decree that the cosmos itself conspires toward transformation. The tapestry of time, woven with threads of anguish and triumph, unfurls endlessly, shimmering with the iridescence of possibility.

To begin anew is not merely to discard the vestiges of yesterday, but to ascend into a realm where imagination becomes architecture and hope becomes foundation. It is the alchemy of courage transmuting despair into destiny, the incandescent flame that illuminates corridors once shrouded in obscurity.

The soul, weary yet unyielding, discovers within its labyrinthine chambers a reservoir of resilience. It rises, not as a timid wanderer, but as a sovereign voyager, charting constellations upon the unmarked firmament of tomorrow. Every heartbeat becomes a proclamation, every breath a covenant, every step a pilgrimage toward horizons yet unnamed.

And so, the continuum persists — beginnings blossoming from endings, endings dissolving into beginnings — a ceaseless dance of genesis and departure. The universe, vast and inscrutable, whispers its eternal benediction: that within the crucible of change lies the architecture of eternity, and within eternity lies the promise of infinite dawns.

In the quiet after the dawn's awakening, when the first light has settled upon the edge of eternity, there breathes a stillness both sacred and electric. It is the hush between heartbeats, where the universe listens to the murmur of creation's pulse. Within that fragile silence, the soul perceives a truth older than time itself — that each renewal is both prophecy and remembrance, each birth an echo of ancient resurrection.

The path unfurls before the traveler like a vein of burning gold, winding through the tapestry of existence. With each stride, footprints bloom like constellations upon the earth, transient yet eternal in their purpose. The wind becomes an oracle, whispering of realms yet unseen, carrying fragments of forgotten dawns and the scent of futures unimagined.

To be reborn is to become both architect and artifact of one's becoming — to sculpt the self from the embers of yesterday and the silver dust of dreams untold. It is to gaze upon the horizon and see not an end, but a threshold shimmering with divine expectancy. For destiny, though inscrutable, is never still; it dances like firelight upon the altar of potential, inviting those who dare to step within its blaze.

And so, the voyager moves onward — unbound, unbroken, illuminated from within. The cosmos turns in slow majesty, and from its heart arises a hymn of infinite renewal: that nothing truly ends, and nothing truly begins, but all is woven in one radiant continuum of becoming — where every dusk is but another dawn in disguise.

Beneath the vaulted expanse of the awakening sky, creation exhales, and the breath of dawn consecrates all that it touches. The rivers glimmer with newfound purpose, the winds murmur hymns of remembrance, and the very soil hums with a pulse as ancient as eternity itself. In this sublime convergence of light and shadow, existence proclaims its eternal covenant: that every rupture births renewal, and every silence conceals a song.

The wanderer, cloaked now in the radiance of understanding, strides through the corridors of becoming. Time bends its knee before such courage, and the cosmos, in quiet reverence, unfurls its hidden symmetries. Each heartbeat becomes a fulcrum, tipping the scales between what was and what yet yearns to be. The soul no longer fears its own immensity; it wears its vastness as a mantle woven from starlight and memory.

To begin is no longer an act of departure, but of return — a spiral ascension through the infinite chambers of being. The ashes of the past no longer signify decay, but the sacred residue of transformation, the gold dust born from dissolution's fire. Within the crucible of becoming, paradox dissolves: loss becomes abundance, ending becomes creation, and the self emerges incandescent — both pilgrim and destination, question and revelation.

And still, the universe turns. Suns ignite, worlds awaken, and across the silent architecture of time flows the eternal hymn of genesis. It is whispered through the marrow of all things: that life, in its boundless reincarnation, is the divine art of beginning forever anew.

The air trembles with unseen music, a resonance born from the marrow of creation itself. Every atom quivers in reverence, attuned to the divine cadence that threads the cosmos into being. In this vast symphony of renewal, the spirit awakens — no longer a mere witness to existence, but its architect, its pulse, its living testament.

The horizon shimmers like molten glass, fluid and infinite, reflecting the pilgrimage of the soul. Through veils of mist and memory, the traveler moves — neither toward nor away, but through — as if guided by an ancient constellational memory etched within the blood. Each step is an invocation, each breath a silent psalm to the boundless.

Emergence becomes revelation: that to be is to perpetually transform, to be both sculptor and stone, both ember and dawn. The old self dissolves like twilight mist, surrendering to the blaze of becoming, and from within the dissolution arises something ineffable — luminous, sovereign, eternal.

The universe, vast and inviolate, bears silent witness. Stars kindle and die like fleeting thoughts in the mind of infinity, yet through their ephemeral brilliance flows a single unbroken truth: that all things return to the beginning, and the beginning is forever reborn.



IMG20260102 by Nasta Martyn

Nasta Martyn is an artist, graphic artist, illustrator, poet, and writer. She graduated from the Academy of Slavic Cultures and has a bachelor's degree in design. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in art history. In 2005, she created a series of graphics dedicated to the Chernobyl disaster, and in the same year, she wrote the series "The Red Book." In 2022, she participated in international exhibitions in China, Taiwan, and the United States. In 2024, she received the Jury's Special Prize for her poster in China.

Sleep-WPS Office

Nasta Martyn

Sleep

White falls on gray

It turns scarlet in the middle,

And freezes inside you, as if there is nothing but

Words unspoken in the darkness...

I know you were

There, long ago, in another country

And ran away... Because I couldn't bear to look at all that was happening...

Didn't I tell you that I don't love you anymore

And I spill the rest of the tea plakton into my dark mouth, flushing it with
a thimble,

A vinaigrette churns in my stomach,

And the night quietly eats away the hours and minutes,

Stopping only at the dawn,

When it's time to leave for work,

Where there is no hope...

If it's possible to begin, then it's necessary to finish...

Then how to end life...

What difference does it make... to burn in a speeding train, or to eat a
dispatched banana,

Someone will live until Monday and see the end of an era,

Someone will dip their pen and He won't write a single line, his scarlet
heart, broken off, rolling like an apple, while up above, the firebird sings

and whines like a dog, heart-rendingly insulting those who are still

breathing too long to remind them of the dead...

Time

No longer because I cry, I strive for immensity...

Blowing up snow and the world, I fly to the first crossing,

forgetting the past,

Exposing other people's nerves, devouring souls in a fit of passion...

Unable to escape...

I and only I, cursing three times, disappear into the abyss to emerge
through the other end of ribs broken in dishonor, a young Polish officer
who sold himself into slavery... Voluntarily and forever...

N R:

I don't write anymore,
 I only listen about bad grades, about children who died of melancholy
 inside the womb, who didn't breathe and were charred Souls,
 And bodies wander the desert,
 And search for a giraffe,
 To shout in its ear... And there, amidst the snow, someone died in a
 snowdrift, from
 A lack of sympathy from the public services,
 And at dawn, a tractor dug up a single glove, clad in human skin, over
 goodness...
 I cried too much,
 To not know,
 That in the desert, there is no ice,
 But only solid snow...
 Now. There will be no words.

On New Year's
 That year, January 9th was like September 11th.
 As a reminder of what happened, I light a candle, like snow. Melts and
 drips into the plate
 Empty and transparent
 Like plastic
 My loneliness
 And you, distorted at the bottom of the glass
 And wild, like a cat, smiling at your Alice,
 And only the darkness in the next room awaits our bodies
 To swallow for a while,
 And then spill into the dawn
 Like an inedible vinaigrette...

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Lotus by Rachel Turney

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how to live without them

Linda M. Crate

some people teach you
how to live without them,
refuse to communicate
or be a true friend or lover;

and the new beginning
without them
feels hard and painful

in the beginning—

yet when you see how
much
you've grown, you start to
miss them
less and less;

you grow toward the light like a
tree or flower—

& you bloom in ways
you may have never even
realized were possible
before.

Anarchy for the Architect

Ace Howlen

lay the foundation of gravel and good intentions spread the cement where
the fields stretch for miles do not worry about asking who owns the field
for this land is said to belong to you and me
and everyone in between, but you see,
there are more homeless than there are homes
and more homeowners collecting properties
to profit off vacations, pricing out poor families
and children who had no choice in being born
but still need a place to lay their head, to stay warm.

set the pillars and the beams, replant what you take of the trees, cut a roof
of tin, so the rain sings them all to sleep and when you bolt the door in
place, remember the hole to peep so they will know who's coming, when
danger may approach so they can take up arms when the strangers come to
broach the topic of their birthright, whether they do or don't belong as this
will surely happen to the people who sing their songs.

insert windows made from stained chapel glass
and fill the hearth with fire and ferocity, enough to set the city ablaze when
the troops come
storming upon us with rifles that do the same,
so they will know our business is camaraderie,
taking care of our own, even those we don't know because we know the
pain of a baby stolen
from the arms of its mother, struggling to survive, to speak a language
born from imperialist pride, and when the ICE melts and the flowers are
reborn, the anarchists will rebuild the lives that were shorn.

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