

*Aquarium of the Pacific*<sup>™</sup>

**AQUARIUM**  
**P O E T R Y**  
V O L U M E I

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

3	Introduction
4	Waves by Vicky J
5	A Peaceful Existence by Vicky J
7	The Sweet Pastry by Vicky J
9	Crush on Crustaceans by David Conrad
10	Neighbors by Edgard Ado
12	Crash Tank by David Chodosh
14	In the Tide Pool by Melanie Lewis
16	Sunken Ship by Melanie Lewis
17	Untitled by Farrah Farhang
18	Blackout Poetry by Susan Schmitt
20	Looking Up by William Jacob Cavanaugh

# INTRODUCTION

“ If there is  
*magic*  
on this planet, it is contained in water. ”

Loren Eiseley,  
The Immense Journey

On February 2, 2017, a group of Aquarium of the Pacific members gathered for the Adult Member Pastries and Poetry event.

UCLA Writing Programs professor Dr. Tara Prescott facilitated the event, introducing the writers to various poetry exercises, including black-out poems, cut-out poems, found poems, and magnetic poetry.

Fueled with coffee and pastries, members set out into the Tropical Pacific and Northern Pacific galleries to observe the marine animals closely, listen to the ideas that came from the swirling waters, and write poems inspired by the exhibits.

This collection offers a sampling of some of the poems written that night. We hope you enjoy them!

# WAVES

Vicky J.

Clinging to the rock the green algae plead to let go,

Let me move with the waves.

Be free.

Torture and movements is all that I know.

Moving with the sounds of the waves makes me ill.

Yet I hang on, I exist in this turbulent life.

I run and hide try to escape, yet I am doomed to the relentless,  
neverending waves of life.

Help! Why me?

# A PEACEFUL EXISTENCE

Vicky J.

Peace and serenity abound my existence.

A Zen-like quality of pure bliss. Still though I be,

I close my tentacles on unsuspecting prey for my benefit.

I cling to the rocks.

I cling to the window.

My existence is totally at peace.

A green algae stands tall and proud.

Guarding my domain, this is what I crave.

A peaceful existence.

Amen.



# THE SWEET PASTRY

Vicky J.

The sweet pastry dances off the roof of my mouth as I watch the graceful movements of the Batfish.

The “Tom and Jerry” hijinks of the smaller cousins and the stony face Parkinson look of the Grouper.

Moving as a group but in a single unit, they ease their way to nowhere.

The Bats gliding through the crowd.

Heavy traffic moves in a consistent circle.

Late for nothing, on time for not.

A small figure drops suddenly from the fluid abyss above.

Descending into the darkness oblivion corralled for eternity in what they call home.

I hear music from the side.

A “honu” (turtle) breaks the monotony by swimming upwards.

Distracted by a shark cutting his way thru the crowd, an opening appears and the shark is gone.

The music continues.

The grouper does not change his menacing face.

One more sweet pastry to end my night.



# CRUSH ON CRUSTACEANS

David Conrad

I have a crush on crustaceans  
Now cephalopods are fine  
But despite their bad reputation  
Crabs are my kind of brine

Their name's synonymous with grouchy  
They do seem easily piqued  
A claw on your toe can be ouchy  
They are pushy and not at all meek

Their sideways gait is preposterous  
Whether to left or to right  
Don't know if they're ambi-walksterous  
Just that they like to fight

# NEIGHBORS

Edgard Ado

Silently we hover

as our neighbors float

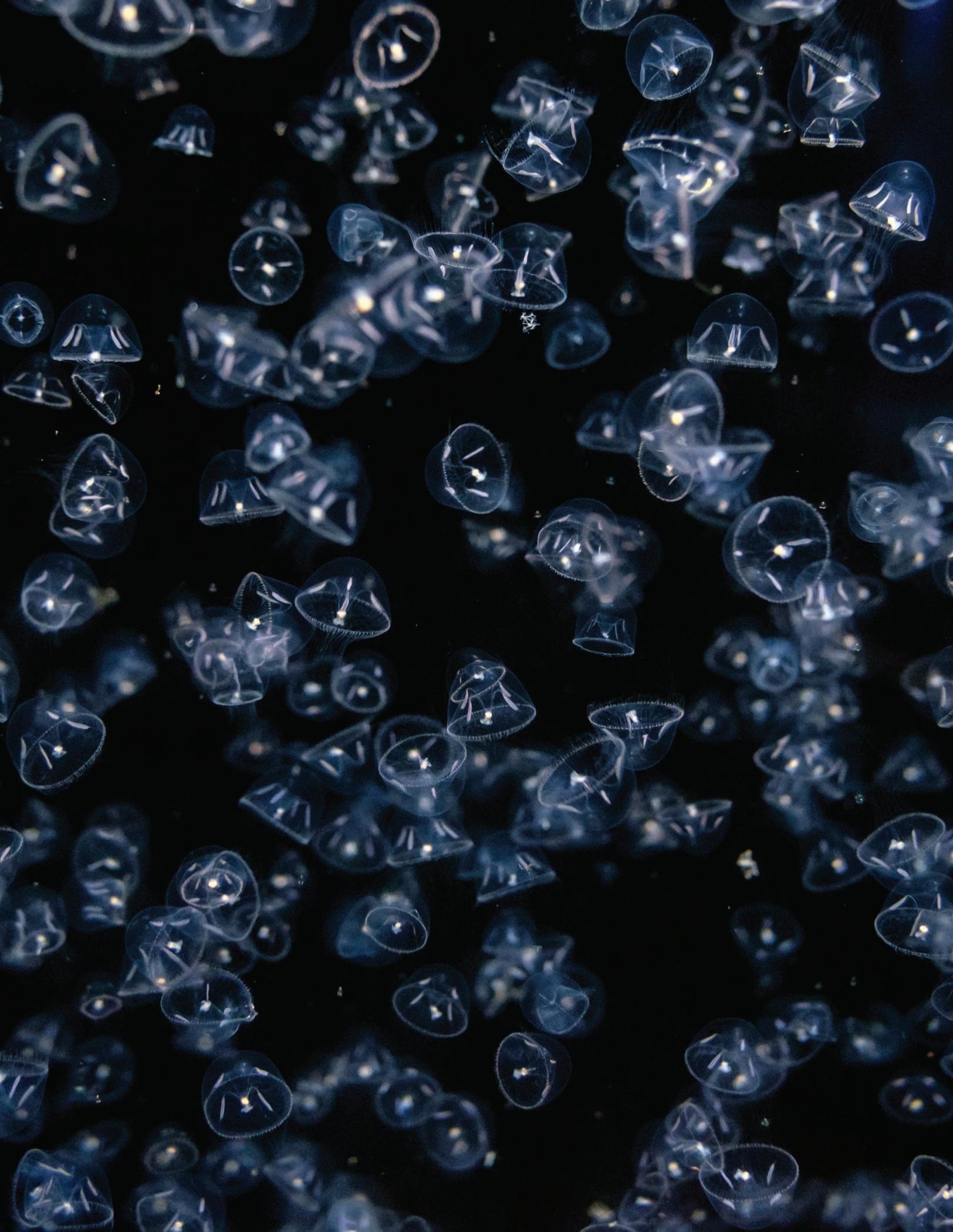
in turbulent space

Lapping o'er and o'er

to and fro

In that same cool void

that is our home.



# CRASH TANK

David Chodosh

Mechanized waves bounce and crash,  
Spray a salty mist into the darkened air.

The violent slapping—does it portend  
a foreboding storm or turbulence by design?  
So chaotic does the surface scream.

Yet, less than a fathom below on the creamy sea floor  
Anemone have found a secure quiet home.  
Pushed and pulled somehow they stay bonded peacefully.  
To the chiseled rock, anchored, immovable, oblivious,  
as the stormy rapids just above rages on and on.



# IN THE TIDE POOL

Melanie Lewis

tiny iron stripe

storm dance

against wicked spray



# SUNKEN SHIP

Melanie Lewis

chains and pulleys  
travel the minutes  
upright in the deep  
bare artificial critters  
the current  
the past  
a torpedoed discovery

# UNTITLED

Farrah Farhang

Some days like them I want to wiggle sideways through life to  
have trees, soft branches,  
kind flowers itching my worries away! Or maybe just stay still for  
hours! Their worry, if they have one, is to be eaten away! Mine  
are many and I still live at the end of them all!  
Small, medium, or large, they all live peacefully together, why  
can't we humans do the same?

# BLACKOUT POETRY

Susan Schmitt

logic  
intrigued inspired existence  
At  
Rainbow

creator  
drove the creatures  
to  
travel by  
seahorse

Neptune used Bronze  
belt to  
Reflection

Dragons in  
The ocean



# LOOKING UP

William Jacob Cavanaugh

I'm looking from beneath at the trembling place  
Where the atmosphere presses itself upon  
The shoulders of the ocean, and of all the creatures,  
I alone am looking up.

But why should I or any other be so foolish—  
To dawdle and waste my gaze?  
I can't discern meaning from  
The scattering colors that ripple from Heaven.

The grouper crosses ambivalently,  
And his large eyes roll around suggesting he knows his place.  
As he stops by a woman in the glass,  
I wonder if he knows his purpose.