Sea Bandits
Sea Bandits

edited by Aubrie Cox
Other *Yay Words!* Projects:

- the backlit fog
- fox dreams
- The Language of Dragons
- open email
- Tea with Trolls
- Things with Wings
- Winged Moon

*Sea Bandits* is a project from *Yay Words!* Poets were invited to submit short form poetry and artwork about the sea and/or thieves/thievery. Each poet who submitted was guaranteed at least one poem into the collection.

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Thanks to Pamela A. Babusci for providing the quote from *Gifts from the Sea.*
Note from the Editor

After some high winds and troubling waters, this collection has finally arrived. I don’t like when I have to delay things, but hopefully it will have been worth it. There’s a good helping of a bit of everything here—haiku, tanka, sequences, rengay, haibun, haiga, prose poems. It’s always a treat to see new people jump in, and regulars try new things.

As I was putting this collection together, it occurred to me that it’s nearly been a year since I started putting these PDF collaborations together on my blog, starting with the backlit fog at the end of September 2011. The last twelve months have been chaotic and full of change (some good, some not-so-good), and sometimes I’ve wondered why I do these collections. I don’t have time for them on top of everything else.

But at the end of the day, I realize I do them because they keep me sane (at least a little). I do them because I love the good-natured community of poets who gather around to participate, and I love good poetry, and I love to share. And I think everyone here does as well.

_Aubrie Cox_
23 September, 2012
“One cannot collect all the beautiful shells on the beach. One can only collect a few. One moon shell is more impressive than three. There is only one moon in the sky.”

—Anne Morrow Lindbergh, *Gift from the Sea*
at the bottom of my father’s tank a broken ship

Peter Newton
sandcastle by ron c. moss

leaving the city a thunderstorm on broken neon
opening a car window just to breath the wind
all the shades of blue smudged on the horizon
warm sand through my fingers the colour of joy
dry flowers tremble beside a faded sepia smile
repairing the wall on an abandoned sandcastle
wing thrust a sea eagle takes the updraft
ti/me

Red lights steal my time
trapped between streets again
I dream of green, open, crossings

_Dorothee Lang_

an octopus trap
in the pawn shop, still wet—
harvest moon

_Mark Harris_
if not for this jail
he’d still be a homeless thief
stray cat
now a hard-boiled convict
with arresting eyes

Johnny Baranski

age old photo
of bygone sailors
the smell of brine
steals
my breath away

Wayne Chou
seaside diner
the drunk sits down and spits
out a poem

morning beach walk
one word of greeting gets
a conversation

it touches my toes
then returns to itself
the morning tide

morning tide
close enough to fill
my toeprint

the dog takes its
reflection into the sea
comes back alone

morning beach
salt spray and a hat
in the wind
throw-aways

only plastic fish left on the tide line
spring tide...
a layer of dust
on the condom packet

Kirsten Cliff

the mermaid’s kiss
turning thirteen
i become a fish

Alan Summers
white feather
our sandcastle surrenders
to the tide

*Cara Holman*

all alone on this beach
I too am
but a grain of sand

*Johnny Baranksi*

where the sea meets the shore driftwood

*Mark E. Brager*
foam flowers
the pull of sand under
my inner child

Carmen Sterba

tidelines
the things
I can’t name

Melissa Allen
alone on the beach
seagulls descend
stealing solitude

Kris Kennedy

receding wave . . .
the somber play of light
on sea glass

Mark E. Brager
The Moon’s Hidden Face
Alegria Imperial

English Bay has swollen and heaves highly under gray skies. I would love to get close to shore as some girls do, taunting the waves. But end my walk I must or soon darkness would blind me. On the bus ride, scanning the shore, I’m seeing last summer in each curve and bend. I catch no laughter in the dense air though, just undone hair curling up in the wind as light as the hem of my skirt then, even if sprayed with foam. The bus lurches to a stop. An elderly lady measures her steps, going down, a stab of her cane first. She waves goodbye with wiry fingers to us who hold our breathe at her fragility. She lingers on the bus stop, her face upturned and, I imagine, relishing the wetness on her cheeks. Against the leaden surf, my back glance catches wildflowers on her bandanna.

somehow
in the moon’s hidden face
a garden
leaving for home—
strands of seaweed wrap
around our ankles

*Carmen Sterba*

day’s end…
the blue of the sea
still in my pockets

*Pamela A. Babusci*
beach bonfire—
my life unfolds
into the colors of the sea

Angela Terry

ripples in the tidepool—
a quieter ocean
in my child’s shell

Michael Dylan Welch

distant cries
the light goes out with the tide

Martin Gottlieb Cohen
night traffic
the smell of seaweed wafts
above the pier

*Martin Gottlieb Cohen*

new moon
my kayak slips quietly
into darkness

*Merrill Gonzales*
stroke of midnight
the blast of fighorns
along the coast

*Carmen Sterba*

oceans
in me, the churn
of galaxies

*Alegria Imperial*
uncle’s fresh catch—
the wood worn
beside the oarlock

Michael Dylan Welch

dolphin song—
slipping in and out
of dawn

Asni Amin
time slows
to a wave’s pace—
the morning moon

Angela Terry

at the sheltered end
of the bay
two gulls preening
watching makes it easier
for me to be alone

Kirsten Cliff
missing home
a mermaid holds to her ear
a broken seashell

Christine L. Villa
lost on a journey . . .
sliding my toes over
the curves of dark stone
smuggler's moon
that first trace of salt
in the air

landlocked... she places
the seashell to her ear

something shiny
on the horizon...
a magpie's song

false sunrise...
it grows colder by the moment
our morning tea

stealing from room to room
faint sunlight

summer's end...
drawing the faded quilt
a little closer
landing swallow—
the ship’s chain
dips slightly

Michael Dylan Welch
Oh! sea bandit
I give you my heart
bear it gently
to my lover
shores apart
when you see him
tenderly implore
tell him
I can bear
the distance, no more

Sapna
dark moon
through the colored glass
a love letter from China

Kathy Nguyen

balmy evening
the whisper of her ashes
from the sea

Christine L. Villa
I can’t tell you; that’s classified; it’s better you don’t know; I can tell you if men were meant to be in the sea, they would need to breathe underwater; all things fall at the same rate; carry me home; I’ve already said too much.

wax wings—
warnings
we ignore

I can give you facts, or Truth; I can’t tell both; moths rely on bright lights to navigate at night by maintaining an angle relative to the light source; some scientists say they come closer to look for hiding places; a lighthouse can mark rocky shores or safe harbors.

lost at sea . . .
a feather
touches down
uneasy sea
uneasy feeling
all my doubts

-- johnny baranski
does fish-god know?
rain can fall
from clear blue skies

Alan Summers
all at sea
by ron moss

ghost waves
a pair of sea eagles
in the updraft

white sands...
the stingray glides
over dark ripples

hard to windward
a seal dives under
the rainstorm
storm cell...
gray water spins
above the wreck

George Hawkins
the message
in the bottle
mostly ocean

*Peter Newton*

songs and dreams
sail in a boat
of no return

*Maria Santomauro*

Ghosts of the lost dead
creep through the fog from the sea—
the peacock’s cry.

*Richard Cody*
Magnetic Island—
possums take the winter moon
from tourists

*Alan Summers*

full moon
a thief pockets
the King Money Frog

*Mark E. Brager*
death still
Alegria Imperial

dead still on the shore. no breath lapping sand. the bay water clear as
eyes. a selvage edge of secrets. a quiet suspiration under a translucent
film of air. a shimmer that wavers underneath over shell shards.

emptied mollusks. spawning stones. furry algae. fibrous weeds.

dead still but not sealed. only walled in. like your eyes, when you stare
within. an absent look. a vacant thought. like i’m not there.
lost in a sea of sameness his dream of going places

Peter Newton

pressure building
sweat slick skin
it will be better soon
after I steal
this saltshaker

Wayne Chou
high winds
off the winter sea
I’ve become Medusa

Angela Terry

nautical twilight
the light off the frost
on fishermen

Alan Summers
third-hand lantern
he steals only
what he needs

Lucas Stensland
a sail from a distance
slip knot promise
Lunar Seas: High Tide (How it Was)

Christina Nguyen

she doesn’t answer
her ringing cell phone
Sea of Crisis
a quick breath
without drama

where do we stand
on this issue?
Sea of the Edge
she nods in time to
the rock dove’s call

in this family
there’s only one way
Sea of Cleverness
just the right words
to make them smile
all the circles
that enclose the truth
Sea of Nectar
a ring
in summer

his heart
in hers
Sea of Clouds
round
with new life
my mind drifts
to the horizon
gathering sea-rocket

Merrill Gonzales

another day
of grace
settling down
towards sunset
seagulls rest on water

Ellen Grace Olinger
rustling leaves—
a thief forgets
his own name

*Stella Pierides*

the ocean
bathed in moonlight
his deep blue eyes

*Cara Holman*
singing moon—
the sea folds itself
into stars

Angie Werren

setting moon
the thief counts
what he didn’t take

Melissa Allen
harvesting sponges—
how the women hold
their breath...

Stella Pierides

sea shore...
there she stole
my heart

Jeff Hanson
sunflowers
open or shut
behind the eye patch

kjmunro
searching for
an unbroken sand dollar
low-tide beach

*kids dolphin dive*
*under the waves*

message in a bottle
the wind steals
my words away

*spaghetti western*
*the bandit rides out*
toward the sunset

playing pirates
we divvy up the loot

*forgotten castle*
*the first touch*
of this foreign sea
this child's hand --
a dream of wind
and pirate's gold
Links Out


Asni Amin - *A Walk in My Heart* <http://awalkinmyheart.wordpress.com/>

Johnny Baranski - @haikumonk <http://twitter.com/#!/haikumonk>

Richard Cody - *Notes From a Life in Progress* <http://notesfromalife.blogspot.com/>

Kirsten Cliff - *Swimming in Lines of Haiku* <http://kirstencliffwrites.blogspot.com>

Martin Gottlieb Cohen - @martin1223 <https://twitter.com/#!/martin1223>

Aubrie Cox - *Yay Words!* <http://yaywords.wordpress.com>

Merrill Gonzales - *snowbirdpress* <http://snowbirdpress.wordpress.com/>

Mark Harris - *markfharrismemes* <https://sites.google.com/site/markfharrismemes/>

Yousei Hime - *Shiteki Na Usagi* <http://tasmith1122.wordpress.com/>

Cara Holman - *Prose Posies* <http://carahoman.wordpress.com>

Alegria Imperial - *jornales* <http://jornales.wordpress.com/>
Kris Kennedy - *Integrative Thought* <http://integrativethought.wordpress.com/>  
Peter Newton - @ThePeterNewton <http://twitter.com/#!/ThePeterNewton>  
Christina Nguyen - *A wish for the sky...* <http://tina.mnnguyen.com/>  
Stella Pierides - *Stella Pierides* <http://stellapierides.com>  
Sapna - *Just Another Wake-Up Call* <http://justanotherwakeupcall.wordpress.com/>  
Carmen Sterba - *East Asian Culture Enthusiast* <http://japanesehistoryenthusiast.wordpress.com/>  
Alan Summers - *With Words* <http://www.withwords.org.uk/>  
Christine L. Villa - *Blossom Rain* <http://blossomrain.blogspot.com/>
Michael Dylan Welch - *Graceguts* <http://sites.google.com/site/graceguts/>

Angie Werren - *feathers* <http://triflings.wordpress.com>
Credits
The following poems first appeared in the listed publications.

“all alone on this beach” by Johnny Baranski
   Modern Haiku 42.3 (Autumn 2011)

“at the sheltered end” by Kirsten Cliff
   Kokako 13 (September, 2010)

“death still” by Alegria Imperial
   qarrtsiluni Fragments Issue (08/21/2012)

“distant cries” by Martin Gottlieb Cohen
   variation in tinywords 2002

“does fish-god know?” by Alan Summers
   Blithe Spirit (vol 22 no. 3 2012); Does Fish-God Know (Yet To Be Named Free Press 2012); Winner of the Blithe Spirit Cover competition for issue 22/2 (John Parsons cover artwork Autumn 2012)

“foam flowers” by Carmen Sterba
   The Heron’s Nest IX:4 (2007)

“leaving for home” by Carmen Sterba
   Frogpond XXVI:2, 2003
“the mermaid’s kiss” by Alan Summers
    *Blithe Spirit* (March 2012); *Does Fish-God Know* (Yet To Be Named Free Press 2012)

“The Moon’s Hidden Face” by Alegria Imperial
    *Multiverses* 1.1

“nautical twilight” by Alan Summers
    *Blithe Spirit*, (December 2011)

“night traffic” by Martin Gottlieb Cohen
    *tinywords* 7 (May 2008)

“the ocean” by Cara Homan
    *Skiki Kukai*, July 2012

“spring tide” by Kirsten Cliff
    *DailyHaiku* Cycle 12 (December 16, 2011)

“stroke of midnight” by Carmen Sterba
    *sunlit jar* (2002); Honorable Mention, WHC New Year’s Double Kukai 2002

“uneasy sea” by Johnny Baranski
    *A Hundred Gourds* 1:2 (March 2012)

“white feather” by Cara Homan
    *DailyHaiku* Cycle 13 (July 2012)
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