

# LUDD GANG



*For the ghosts*

*the fallen, the forgotten;  
who continue to haunt our present*

GUEST EDITED BY LOTTE L.S.  
TYPESET AND PRINTED BY ALEX MARSH, DOM HALE  
TOM CROMPTON & SAM WESELOWSKI

COVER: FLEEING GREAT YARMOUTH PIER, BOMBED BY THE  
SUFFRAGETTES IN 1914

MARCH 2025

# LUDD GANG

25

## POEMS BY

Jay Bernard	2
Mira Mattar	4
Lotta Thießen	6
Gia Mawusi	8
Oki Sogumi	11
Kaleem Hawa	12
Jason Parr	14
Domingas Samy/Mendivan	16
Lotte L.S.	18
L. Etchart/ <i>l'imprimerie</i>	20



# JAY BERNARD

Driving he says when he was young it was  
blacks and whites            he wants to leave London  
has no love for *poles*        *albanians*            he says  
when he was young

Talking in the car at night            we can pretend  
that it is love                            we catch in intervals  
street light to his face                    as rust is to a blade  
love is love                                it respects locks and keys

Driving he says he wants no part of Europe  
will build a house                    grow his own avocados  
and be content                        staring straight  
I see his promise land                there is no house for me

Speaking is to mimic is to cut is to splice  
a gesture you admire                    that you feel is true  
and listening        I hear his whole conversation  
his whole resignation                    a lurid stethoscope

Driving he says what someone said to him  
his own country                    yes            his own  
to make *laws*                            *authority*            flash of kin  
with those who laugh                    at him

Recalling this        he says        he is going soon  
his voice        of arousal        not father voice  
it's the TV's        it's the adverts        it's the rally  
in which        his heart admits        this mistake

Driving his eyes and voice are far        yes  
resolve to go        his own country  
his mind goes over        tills itself        never me  
I do not grow there        as native grass

# MIRA MATTAR

December 2023. Got to talking the usual way, eyes in the rearview mirror, his red-rimmed, blood red. From downtown to my mum's in west he chain smoked, lit one off the other. He came from Gaza alone and young years ago, his sister, mother and others are displaced and drinking dirty water, sewage water he half-screams. The car feels small and J senses without interpretation. His father, his brother, he says, all martyred. My eyes well up and I'm ashamed and nervous about saying the wrong thing in Arabic so I say allah yerhamhom. J senses. It felt crude to translate it there and then between the second circle and the third, malls, beggars, fumes. It felt crude to put it into English at all or have his words come out of my mouth at all. SUN, how do we tell the stories of others? I'm not sure we should. Everyone I met in Palestine said: tell our story. Edward Said wrote that it is the duty of the Arab writer to write the present. He goes on to explain how the present does not exist until we tell it. On 3 January 2024 @MahaGaza wrote 'we're still alive because we have a story to tell'. *Because*. How do we enter the present? They shot me, he said, holds up his hand, a scar from between the thumb and index of his right hand down to the wrist. See, he says, I can't fully move my hand, he makes to stretch, to flex, but it won't. How to enter the present when we can't even move. They don't have money to buy flour. Two days ago I'd read that people were eating bird food, grain they give chickens. The chickens are dead and the birds have

left. Yesterday we had a feast of chicken soaked in onions and sumac and olive oil drenched bread. A lot of people in the West Bank aren't eating, won't, a therapist friend told me over lunch in Waterloo. My eyes well up and I'm ashamed, then ashamed of my shame. They're starving he says. At the end of most transactions in Amman the seller says no no it's on me, and the buyer protests, and the seller says please, and the buyer says please, and then you pay. You English can't believe me but it makes a cut in something. Only twice have I ever experienced Palestinians asking for money. Once little boys in Al Khalil and once now. This man. Eyes, blood, smoke. He asks directly. I give him 10JDs, he asks for 5 more. I lie, that's all I have. Later I tell J and he says nothing and I know this means he thinks I should have given the extra 5 and more, and he's right but he feels like it's not his place. Britain still occupies us you know, I joke to make him feel bad to make myself feel better.



# LOTTA THIEßEN

## SCENES OF AN EDUCATION

*after Greta and Adam Kuckhoff*

the earth fulfilled another orbit the year bit its tail as it  
does each day and today the sun has milk in its eyes and  
the sky is finally muted and silence falls into sleep or sleep  
into silence or silence is sleep and the clouds are spineless  
and concrete returns in bread crumbs and the buildings  
have wilted like flowers to the sides of the street in the  
mouth words become ash spit trickles turns it to paste  
dribbles into the day good morning peace be with you what did you dream

*I dreamt the earth fulfilled  
another orbit and history bit  
its tail ate its long body  
backwards and its inner circle  
shrank to the size of a pin*

when he was three she sat him out in the winter street and it hailed kids fists like  
provisions for the haunting prospect of the loneliness that would follow their arrest.  
when he wanted a flag like the other kids and found a paper one his father told him  
to bury it on the side of the road. you'll see one day it will blossom in crimson red and  
you will hold it up high and float it through the streets. when he came home and said

the people carrying the rubble next door were evil she said not to believe everything he heard if he had questions to come to her. when he was scared of the whirring of the planes in the sky he took him high up on the roof and wiped the fear away with constellations. sometime before christmas he came home to his parents who'd built him a world in the alcove of the atelier, left nothing to chance, forests teeming with deer, villages with pig families, and geese, the city of lübeck, the ore mountains, a mirror lake, skyscrapers, buses, schools and hospitals. when he said that which you don't do too soon you do too late he was right. when she was in prison she wrote to him of a ray of light a fellow prisoner made dance on her wall with a mirror and of the food they had eaten together, of memorized feasts, until she knew they would have their fill, she wrote, I did not drink but the sun shines so bright

*these walls are the grey  
distilled from over 365  
Berlin afternoons*

# GIA MAWUSI

## Ghosts

If we must die, let it not be like hogs  
Hunted and penned in an inglorious spot,  
While round us bark the mad and hungry dogs,  
Making their mock at our accursed lot.

Claude McKay

i don't know  
this feeling of being adrift in the world  
...  
i think i write  
to get revenge

or to bury myself in the earth i was pulled out  
decades  
before i was born

Adelaide Ivanova

From my terrace I look at the scrapyard.

So many cars, piles and piles of broken, twisted metal,  
banging, being torn apart.

The crane lifts more pieces into the air  
angrily, from up high,  
and lets them crash  
into the mass of metallic bodies  
breaking their spines.  
It rains outside.

I am not lost, but not entirely me or myself tonight.

Between the numbness and the anger  
I keep thinking about how fucked up is my life.

And the *gully-beings* are hiding  
away in the gutters  
somewhere where the lights cannot find them lacking.

[Their *bettors* do know better...]

So, the *gullies* keep hiding in silence  
where there is some kind of warmth and safety inside,  
where reality and judgement *cannot* hurt *them* or find.

This place of despair is full of stories  
of hate, love, loss and nothing of consequence  
that amounts to anything relevant,  
important, life changing, purposeful and meaningful.  
Like the pile of the old dead woman's  
dead-end cigarettes, half-smoked, half-lived,  
drowning in the rivulets of the small darkish grey currents  
pushing them further into the mud to be buried.

Across the road, where the old woman died,  
the house is boarded and falling apart in places.  
The ceiling has caved in and there are weeds growing on the walls  
and bursting from the top windows and dirty pipes.

She died alone in that decrepit old house.

The windows are dusty and broken on the right side.  
There is no one living there now.

[Maybe just the old dead woman's ghost  
that comes out at nighttime

to haunt the living.]

I stay where I am and watch it from where I stand.  
I look out, searching for a purpose, a meaning that evades  
my understanding.  
Life continues either we live or die.  
The truth is looking out, looking in, without really seeing what is what.

[Knowing who is who is no longer important.]

Someone screams outside.

There are too many distractions, too many ghosts here  
and in that dead old woman's house.

My eyes water, my mind shuts, my dull heart wanders  
in a universe that I should not dwell in, should not venture inside.

The rain now washes my windows with water and sleet.  
There is a deep sadness within this weather  
and the mournful rhythmic sounds on the glass,  
awakens the dead rebels scattered on the peeling paintings.

I sit on this wooden chest crushed between the strife  
of existing, enduring, resisting, persisting, not living.

I don't know which ghosts have visited me tonight.  
I just know how fucked up is my life.

# OKI SOGUMI

## Away stage

Oil truck idling next to Philadelphia kittens

Feeding in the lower branches

Tooth fallen into lapping edge

Leaning trellis we meet again

a style of stern braid

thinking of what to give away as it gives away to ribbons

My hairbrush escaped to join the living?

It's possible to go toward danger and warmth

The Lee-tzsche tambourine kick song the darkening harbor lined with  
sailboats banners cranes and Exit  
is everyone with

# KALEEM HAWA

## He's Never Coming Back(2)

Sit on a balcony, but not a quiet one,  
with a steaming cup of Nescafé gold.  
Fool around with a hoodie to block out the sounds of the exhaust,  
while the music I'm playing becomes harder to hear.

A *kheeeeeeeeh* all around me,  
busted sync-up, sunset-swing, router hiccup,  
hallucinated a chapstick I never used to need,  
and remembered that earphones exist.

The night before it was cold and then it was cozy,  
drawn as if by slow magic to the double blanket,  
and the tartan pajama,  
burning a hole into my corner of the wall.  
Nuked my brain;  
cold is cold, it does what it does best, when daybreak's imminent.

Slept at four in the morning,  
texting people as if they're globules, gobbled up by the little hemo  
that I can occasionally get at if I scratch sensitively and persistently enough.  
You're in the other room wrapped up,  
I think I cuddled up against you once,  
but it didn't feel the same, now soaked

with duty. (My husband didn't die, yours did.)

I WANT TO BELIEVE in scalp . . .  
in drones.

Flicking cigarettes to the beat,  
everyone annoys me, and  
the Lebanese channels aren't talking about Gaza,  
anymore, while I chain smoke and you say nothing,  
because the company is nice, it breaks the monotony  
insisted upon against the passing of time.

Placidity, first improvised, then learned,  
unmovable bureaucratic fervor,  
divine confidence, repackaged as  
dull unfeeling rote-ness (sp.?), rotidity (sp.?)—  
I can type and not feel, it's perhaps best;  
fury is ok, rage less so, autopilot is better,  
an AUTO-POETIC TURN was always imminent,

weak as I am. *Kheeeeeeeeh* . . . We got sorcerers and sorceresses  
up the wazoo, they've got their little classrooms and stages, and audiences  
with white candles, noisemakers. They've got it good.  
Me? I got a linguistic sitch that's not mine, some people said so.

Listen to music in a language you don't know,  
the day will be over before you know it, Happy New Year,  
someone else had a better one, though most people's was worse.



# JASON PARR

## FORM 1

FLAT LANDS

DISTANT

SOME COD CAUGHT

TO STEW

MANY  
DROWNED

THREE RIVERS

MOUTHS FLOWING

BROADENING

FISH FINGERS

BIRDS EYE LOST

WAVENY WOODS

LOUND LAKES

KING ST

FOREIGN TOUNGE

FLOODED CELLAR

POUNDLAND

SPLASHING  
DISCOUNT

THE BEAST FROM THE EAST

SHIT BROWN

GREY

GREEN

STACCATO STUTTER  
WORKING

BUS STOPPING

CRYING QUIETLY

EVEN HELLO AIN'T HERE

TURQUOISE

MORNING CHORUS  
THE SPARROWS ARE BACK  
TRAFFIC AND CLACK

approx 7am

THE ALARM CHIMES

THE SCHOOL BELLS SAYS

WE'RE LATE

VARIED EXCUSES AWAITS

CREATIVE PROCESS  
IMPROVISING

PIANO ----->CONDUCTOR ----->BLUES

SCALES

STONE CARVING

WOOD WORK

PERSONAL  
SUBCONSCIOUS  
IMAGINATION

FUCK THESE WORDS

# DOMINGAS SAMY

## TRANSLATED BY MENDIVAN

*Domingas Samy was born in Cacheu, in Guinea-Bissau in 1955. She was a longstanding member of the The African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC). This poem was originally written in Portuguese in 1979, during a period of her life spent in the Soviet Union. It was written in memory of the assassination of the revolutionary Amílcar Cabral, which came just 4 months after Guinea-Bissau's long and bloody armed struggle, and victory, over Portuguese colonialism.*

Why are you crying mama?

Why?

Why are you crying mama?

Why did they sadden your children?

Why is everything dark?

Why are the flowers of the garden grieving?

Why are they dead?

Why mama?

Answer Mama!

Why do I feel strange today?

And why are you crying Mama?

Don't cry anymore!

— Answer me!

Why are you crying?

In a thin voice

but with affection, she replied:  
— My dear!  
The Imperialists killed your older brother.

Everything went dark  
and in the middle of this darkness  
and silence,  
sounds like children's voices:  
— Don't cry Mama!  
— Don't cry!  
— Cabral isn't dead.  
— He is always with us:  
today, tomorrow, forever  
because he is the light  
and guide of our People.

*1979*

LOTTE L.S.

Véronique

I have nothing to say  
and this is me saying it. The blunted knives on the table  
are proof of what will happen.  
What has already happened. Huge ravens cawing  
in the dark trees ahead. It happened already  
while we were still debating the rooks.  
Language that riots / and screams  
in this staggered cave,  
far away from the cities, the people, the laughter.  
You asked me to sing  
and then you seemed not to hear.

Evenings the usually-whistling birds are mute,  
medically untrained for the operation—  
so how did we expect the line  
to occur?  
Voyage, oh voyage! It's 6AM (or is  
it PM?) and Véronique is in her cave,  
buried in the limestone belly of southern France.  
There is morning dew on the grass  
but she has no idea  
from 275 ft underground.

The tools are waiting calmly on the table.

Neither the scientists nor the world  
remember how long she has been down there

L. ETCHART

TRANSLATED BY L'IMPRIMERIE, MARSEILLE

*Translation from French of an extract from Tupamadre by L. Etchart (Terrasses Editions, 2023), a first-person narrative recounting the story of the narrator's mother, a "Tupamara" – an armed militant of the National Liberation Movement in 1960s Uruguay.*

The rooms tiny. Theres a red sofa, a tv n a big window overlooking a tiny balcony w/ two plastic chairs. From the balcony you can see a big chunk of the city. Settlers, presidents, ministers, mayors, bunch of old dudes with matching europe kinks gave it all for the city to resemble the continent they fetishized. Before the guerrilla, when rightwing dictatorship was hot n ready to serve, when the people was starving, when the sugarcane uñon walked across effing country coming going coming going coming going to uñonize evryone n scru the bosses, when the big landowners land was squatted under the 'Land For Those Who Work It' banner, the govrnment came up with this cool notion, since genociding originaries n blacks had worked so well, what fine publicity for the country to sell it even better to Europe n the us. The police was killing the poor, prisons multiplied easier than the 2 times table, people were disappearing overnite and Uruguay was known as The Switzerland of South America. Rad. When u look at the city from the balcony its clear how its not quite Paris but surely its uglier n poorer sister. The switzerland of South America, terminal stage.

[...]

My mums gonna die in two days. [...]

Shes crying tears are flowing my throat hurts.

I stare at the red sofa i dont blink.

With my fingers i draw lil waves on her skull.

I feel tiny baby hairs growing.

They're growing because the docs took her off chemo coz they say the drugs arent tested beyond six months and shes been on them for two years.

Its not safe to poison her like that they say.

That shes way beyond survival rate they say.

[...]

I dont say or think but i see. I see in the bones in her back i see in the baby hair on her skull i see in the tears that find their way thru my toes. I see history repeating n repeating n repeating. All the tracks i walked in the past, a dozen tiny pieces make up a clear image of the 1000-piece puzzle in my mind. I see her kidnap members of the armed forces i see her stick a tommy gun into the driver of a truck loded w/ weapons i see her stuff her maternity bag w/ weapns. I see her homeless w/ her first baby. I see her lose her first baby at the hands of cops. Sleep on the streets. Alone in the streets. Starving in the streets. Pregnant with baby number 2, looking everynite for a different shelter in a different hidden spot in the street. Leaving for Chile pregnant. Giving burth hidden behind a mattress to keep safe from the bullets. Starving in the shelter. Seeking refuge in France w/ a skinny baby n one baby short. Docs are right for fukkin once. Shes way beyond survival rate.

I see her in the estate flat in Nanterre locking herself in the toilets her head deep in a towel waiting for her eyes to stop crying so she can make up her bruises and go to work in the sweatshop to feed the kid whos her son that she last saw when he was 10-mth-old who just got to France after eight years and her best friend, her 7yo girl who wants to be a ballet dancer n buy toys n do what every other 7yo girls do and the dude who studies filosofy and therefor too busy to work whos her husband whos punchd her into being an expert in silence nd make up.



I draw lil waves.  
On her yellow skull.  
My lil waves are trying  
To soak in some of the pain  
To make it mine  
Beg yall beg you beg me  
Let them soak in  
Let them soak in  
Let them soak in.



## SIX BIRDS SPLIT FROM THE MURMURATION

Gia Mawusi's pamphlet *And the Secrets are Shouted-Whispered* was published by **red herring press** last year, and is available via the website, along with a bunch of other publications: [www.redherringpress.org/publications](http://www.redherringpress.org/publications). All members of red herring press get copies of past and future pamphlets - more info up at the website.

**Crisis Crystal** is a new free online reading series organised by Robyn Skyrme, every Sunday for an hour from 9pm beginning 23<sup>rd</sup> March. To get an email link, email [crisis@robynskyr.me](mailto:crisis@robynskyr.me) with 'LINK' as both the subject line and message.

Francis Jones's new book of poems *Storm Drain* is out soon from **Veer2** who publish lots of other great stuff. Launching at Housmans Bookshop, London, on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> March at 6pm.

Check out **Distance No Object**, **RunAmok** and **Materials** for all the good shit.

Glasgow's **SPAM Press** are seeking submissions of critical work inspired by sleep procrastination, neural net neurosis, somnambulist clickholes and more by 12<sup>th</sup> March.

*The New Cambridge Chapbook Review* recently published its first issue: go to [www.tncr.co.uk](http://www.tncr.co.uk) to pick up a copy and for details on how to contribute. All profits to Medical Aid for Palestinians.

There's a new small press called **Mouthpiece** based in the West Midlands. Sightings include pamphlets printed on the occasion of the poetry readings *The Off Seasons* (featuring Nora Fulton, Imogen Cassels, and Luke Roberts) and *Three of Hearts* (featuring Steff Hui Ci Ling, James Goodwin, and Clint Burnham). Keep your lugholes to the ground.

