

[Home](#)

[Autumn 2009](#)

[Summer 2009](#)

[Spring 2009](#)

[Autumn 2008](#)

[Summer 2008](#)

[Spring/Summer 2008](#)

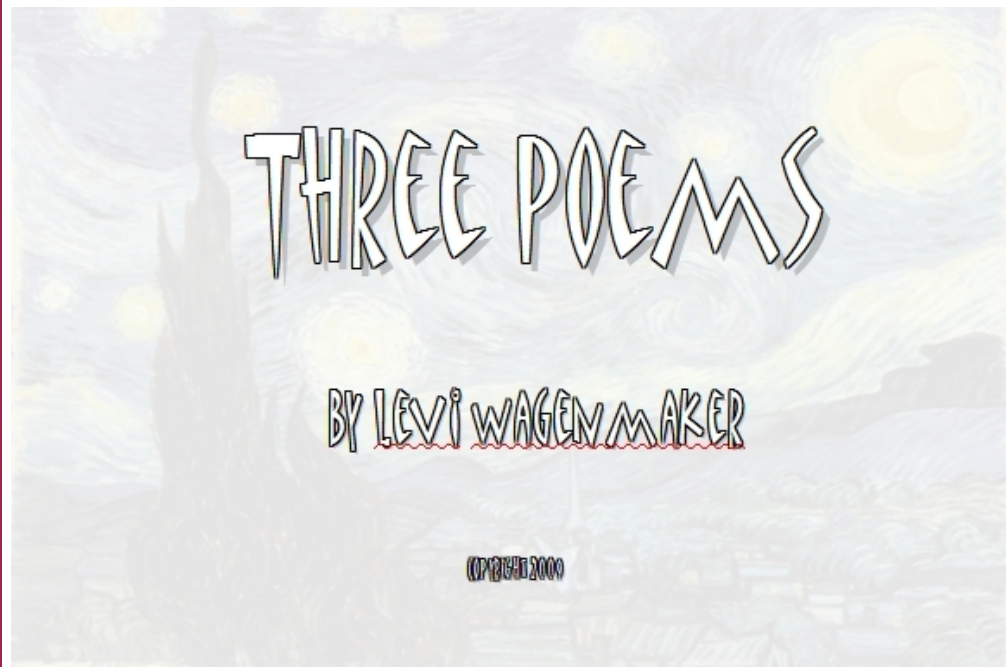
[Winter/Spring 2008](#)

[Editor's Note](#)

[Guidelines](#)

[SNR's Writers](#)

[Contact](#)



the pen

the pen I bought in Aubusson
along with some books in French
can be manipulated
to switch ink reservoirs
by sliding the active one into place
to enable writing in
marking up
days of various colours
black letter days
for gorgeous black girls
blue letter days
for being ignored by them
green letter days
to celebrate heads of lettuce
red letter days
for days of saints and tampons
and socialists
walls of white paper
patiently await being written on
but I used it for poems
and keeping the scores
of my blood-glucose testing
all in blue
but one day
blue will run out
and then
I will have to decide in which colour
to write
with just three choices
instead of four
gorgeous black girls
are very seductive

to Heather

think of all the thoughts
the words and emotions
and of what they were
before language and logic
someone somewhere first thought
of thoughts as thinking
perhaps making up the words
as she went along
on the fly
think of where all the words went
that went
unrecorded
and not just before there were
scripts and letters and characters
symbols
think of all the light
emitted by the suns
we see as stars
on cloudless nights like this
light is more than the sum of its parts
as soon as it is seen
think of how violent the universe would be
if photons emitted stars
instead of vice versa

her mouth tasted of starlight

kissing an astronomer is different

zilch

triple is a nervous word
fingers drumming on a desk
or a table or a thigh
something like knocking on wood
but more so
the desk may be synthetic
the table made of Formica
but a thigh is still a thigh
unless it's a prosthesis
a world full of falsies
fake tits and fake willows
singing nothing real
singing is nothing real

nothing is real
a real nothing

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Levi Wagenmaker is a retired journalist, living in the Netherlands for most of the year, and in France for some of it. He read law, but chance with the aid of a Norwegian (Sami) girlfriend offloaded him to journalism. His poems have been published in *Strangeroad.com*; *Danse Macabre*; *Ascent Aspirations Magazine*; *Poems Niedergasse*; *decomp* magazine; *Gator Springs Gazette*; *Clockwise Cat*; *Mastodon Dentist*; *Leaf Garden*; *Snakeskin Poetry Webzine*; *Gloom Cupboard*; *Write Me a Metaphor*; *The New Verse News*; *Bicycle Review*; *The Balloon*; *The Smoking Book*; *Nefarious Ballerina*. salman@xs4all.nl.