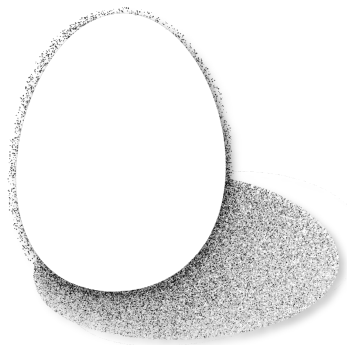
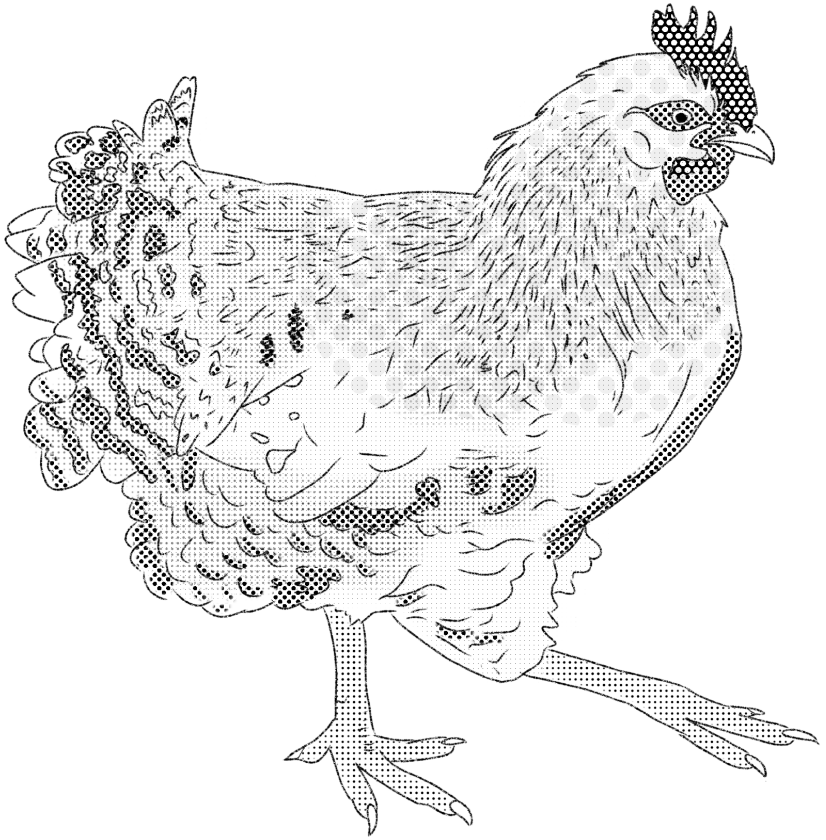


find more at coopzine.wordpress.com

COOP

chickens of our poetry



an art and poetry zine

Editor's note

Fortis

I've wanted to make a zine for several years, but I never had any ideas for what would make a good one. Then alliyah started a chicken poetry movement on our writing website and I saw the perfect egg shape of a potential zine. Chicken poetry and art focuses on creation rather than perfection, and I had been itching to create a zine that had that same rough exuberance and unpolished passion.

COOP had been a dream of ours for several months before we even started working on our call for submissions. But once the idea entered my brain, I could tell it would be roosting there until I could hold the zine in hand.

So here's to new beginnings, here's to cracking the egg of zine publishing, and here's to breaking out of the comfort zone shell. Thanks to youngwriterssociety.com and alliyah, of course, who is the best collaborator anyone could ask for!

Editor's note

alliyah

So, chickens and poetry and art? How in the world did this come together? Well, I've long thought that the question "why did the chicken cross the road?" is a great remedy to writer's block. Adding a random chicken, feather, or egg to your work when you're not sure what comes next is built in permission to not be perfect, to be a little silly, or random. It might not make it into the final product - but can work as a drafting placeholder to keep up the writing momentum, and avoid mid-draft writer's block. It might seem nonsensical to throw chickens into literature or art without reason, but when that perfection-filter is down, you might be surprised at what sorts of honest and creative work happens. It turns out chickens are a surprisingly diverse subject on their own too.

When fortis suggested the idea of creating a whole zine of chicken works, I thought this would be a wonderful opportunity to continue to encourage that idea of throwing out perfectionism and seeing what creativity might hatch. Intentionally choosing to put together a whole zine of chicken themed art and poetry really serves as a call to keep writing! Don't drop the pen or pencil, keep click-clacking on those keys! With a chicken or two you can cross the road to the other side! It's been a privilege to work on this project with fortis and I have to give a big thank you to youngwriterssociety.com for connecting us and fostering the sort of creativity that allows experiments like this to flourish.

COOP

chickens of our poetry

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coopzine.wordpress.com

For submission and publication inquiries please contact us at coopzine@gmail.com

Content Warning: Some poems portray animal death.

one day we'll tell of the spring
untouched, we'll tell it untrue, we'll tell it unaltered,
we'll tell of the birds gone, and the birds returned,
of the sun's leaving, of the night's unending,
we'll tell of the spring when nothing it seemed
could be understood, when it all was a dream,
when it all was undone, when it all is unspun,
we'll tell, we'll tell, of that untold spring.

a year unsprung

alliyah

one day they'll tell of the spring
untouched, when dormant soil was left unturned;
footprints absent and ant-hills all unbothered,
with the long stretch of road untraveled. they'll tell
of the year the robins failed to return, where spring
came unsung, and earth remained quiet-frozen
in that winter without end, in that vacillating un-spring.

there's a legend that while the sky was left
unwatched, that it became unnervingly uninhabited
that the clouds followed the birds, and the sun
refused to return, they say the nights grew long
and longer still, until there was no day, until there
was really no night at all, unwaking we walked,
unwaking we waited; one day they will tell of that spring.

there's a legend that while the fields were bare
unharvested, that spring, when all was undone,
that someone left Easter eggs unknowing the news
that the world was meant to end, and they say in hushed
voice that the chocolate-filled plastic discarded, became
new life, became planted, and from the soil unwatched
emerged true chickens; unhatched, chirp chatting -
unconcerned with rules of creation all being unmade
they sprung! they sprung! that unusual spring.

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Rise of the Planet of Chicks

Hkumar

After Corona finally wiped humans
from the face of this earth,
there came the dawn for a new predator
who would rule this world.

Evolved from the mighty dinos
these birds marched fiercely with
scrawny claws claiming their territories.
Breaking the confines of dingy coops
clucking around to mark liberation.
Fleeing the oppression and tyranny
of only getting featured in fancy menus
as hot wings or spicy nuggets.

No more grilling! No more frying!
Now chickens will enjoy freedom
from the gluttony of evil men.
Chicken mamas will worry no more
about their eggs being stolen
to satiate human's perpetual hunger.

A beautiful life

Among landscape and trees

While man watches them play

With something of glee

But one day they die

From man's

Pessimistic

Needs

The tear of a wing

Bite of a breast

R.I.P chicken

Now we are fed

i refuse to believe in chickens

whatchamacallit

with a bright yellow chick
cupped like a scoop of stardust
in my palms,
i can't imagine how dandelion down
can become autumn leaves
of brown red and orange -
and though i know even suns have timers
i refuse to believe this fluffy little thing
will one day burst into a supernova.

an ode to the mother hen

Arcticus

mother dear
soft-feathered mama
we're your eggs
but we're chicks no more
so when we go
where the cat may roam
cluck and scold
and peck us back home

harsh mama
your ways are strange
did you count the eggs
before we were named?
it's cold outside
so spread your arms
and coo us home
into feathery warmth

Chop off their heads
They ran and played
In grass that was green
Freedom was theirs
With the touch of their beak

The farmer ran outside
To round up his chickens
But when he failed
Against the clucks and chirps
He got his gun
And shot one dead

He brought it home and set the table
Poked at the corpse
With his knife and fork
He tried it
And winced
But it tasted good
Better than before

Now chicken and man
Live in harmony
The chickens live

Chicken's victory

illy7896

Beaks and claws
Cries and whoops
The farmer's food
Is in waiting

The wise man carries scratches
Strewn across his arm
Raw and fresh
With cuts and wounds
Where his victim retaliated
In a childish fit

He pulls off a leg
Takes off a wing
Bites off a breast
Along with his drink

One day the chickens escaped
Fled their stubborn cages
From a pick and a peck
No longer would the farmer

Mother Hen Forever

SirenCymbaline

Simple are the means, and simple are the ends
Ready are the claws, if notsomuch the wings
Tiny eyes blaze scarlet down the old garden path
It's the hen, mother hen, and her fluffy scruffy wroth

Little heads bob from under her heaving feather skirts
Precious little fluffling ones, a-rolling in the dirt
Beady eyes glow orange with the fires of love and pride
It's the hen, mother hen, and her fierceful chicks astride

Goosey goosey gander and mucky ducky squabble, takahē steals eggs away and swans bring only trouble;

Rooster's good to strut and strut- and that's about it, really,

But Mother Hen, and simple ends, are blest with glows aplenty.

Brooding Bird

alliyah

Chicken Lady

for alliyah

Arcticus

there once was a Chicken Lady
who fancied chicken
she would feed them chickpeas
until they thickened

when they grew thick
some she would cook
yet most she spared
and after them, looked

good old Chicken Lady
God-conscious, sweet
she would have chick-pea soup
with some chicken meat

a few eggs she took
from the coops with hens
the rest would hatch
into future chicken friends

Winged Embrace

Holysocks

her feathers fluffed around her
tucked in the crook of an arm-
an embrace that peaked brows.

frost stiffened wings,
snowflakes resting on her beak as eyelids fought to remain
    open.
warmth abundant in an era of ice
and wind-stricken hills.

hens huddled in their coop,
patiently awaiting the sun-
but not she with her dearest friend
swept up in a realm of safety and love,
whisked away to a time when air couldn't freeze breath.

she clucked softly, leaning in closer
her keeper pulled the wool coat tighter around them,
knowing that snow-drifts and icicles
wouldn't disrupt a friendship conceived in summer.

Stilled Wings

A tanka

whatchamacallit

Moonlight stirs the sleep-
-deprived air, carrying dust
down to straw bedding
where feather-bundles nestle
like puppets waiting to wake.

Chicken or Egg

MaybeAndrew

Which came first, the chicken or the egg?

Wondered Little David Begg

See, David Begg wasn't too smart

He couldn't tell his hens and roosters apart

He did not know that chickens, on the scale of things, are new

But eggs, have been here since before things flew

But little David Begg didn't know that

So he went on wondering about all of this beneath his hat

And in the end, no one told little David Begg

Whether it was the chicken or the egg

He doesn't know to this day

But that?

That is okay.

art by Liminality

the chickens.

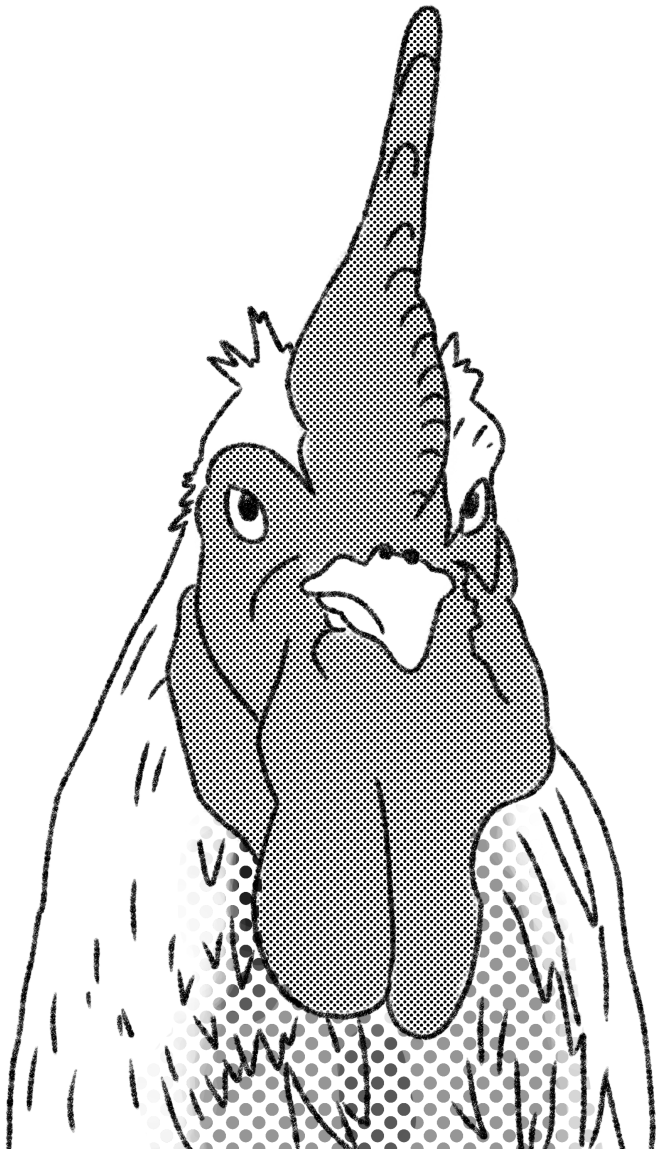
Liminality

dark before dawn, rise
the chickens. pitchfork feet scrape
and scratch-tap the earth;
claw like a fish hook draws back,
revealing a fat pink worm.

I am coaxing them
scrabbling, back to the front porch
under breezy stairs,
each will rest on wooden planks
soft downy cushions — for now.

Ask not for whom the chicken clucks; it clucks for thee.

Fortis



this chicken nugget slaps

Carina

inspiration suddenly strikes, and i find myself questioning —

not the nature of the universe,

or where i see myself ten years from now,

but instead,

the age-old question

that has yet to be answered by mankind:

"How fast do i need to slap a chicken nugget to cook it?"

i

think and think

and i think

i pull out my heat transfer

notes and equations

and i nod

and begin

to write:

$$q_{cond} = q_{KE}$$

yes… yes, yes of course:

con·duc·tion *(noun)*: heat transfer through materials, i.e. hand to chicken

ki·net·ic en·er·gy *(noun)*: energy for movement, i.e. slapping chicken.

but what did that mean? …

it was time to

redefine the definition with letters,

stubborn star

Oxara

The stars reflecting in my eyes
As if I could catch the entirety of space
Put it in a cage in my eyes, but
Dead chickens don't cluck.

I reached out my hand
But my hand was attacked
And it was left without anything, because
Dead chickens don't cluck.

So I stand here on this abyss
Facing out over what I've done
Facing what I still have to do, and I know
Dead chickens don't cluck.

So I tack back my words
You twisted them, their very meanings
Like a spider weaves silk
But you have forgotten one thing
Dead chickens don't cluck.

chickens will eat chicken nuggets without batting an eye

soundofmind

never so clear
has the spirit of murder
been put on display
than in the wide-eyed
ignorant blood-lust
of a chicken's desperate hunger
as they devour the meat of their own
without a second thought

what is to be said
of the fowl that eagerly rejoice
in the destruction of their brethren
if it means for them, a full stomach?

when death and longing meet
how much do we blame on stupidity?
and how much do we blame
on despair?

not words —

$$kL\Delta T = \frac{1}{2}mv^2$$

ah… yes, of course:

[k] **ther·mal con·duc·tiv·i·ty** *(noun)*: material's measure ment of its ability to conduct or transfer heat, i.e. chicken being warmed.

[L] **length** *(noun)*: measurement from end to end, i.e. how long the chicken is.

[m] **mass** *(noun)*: body of matter, i.e. how much does the chicken weigh.

[v] **ve·loc·ity** *(noun)*: speed with direction, i.e. how fast is the slap.

but of course...
letters are as vague as a
string of abc's
one by one,
a- b- c- d-,
not meaning anything but its
mere name —
a var·i·able.

so i place my control volume
around this chicken nugget —
and i can now see the letters
breathe to life with identity.

$$k_{nug}L_{nug}\left(T_{oven} - T_{freezer}\right) = \frac{1}{2}m_{nugget}v_{slap}^2$$

the warden's little jailbirds

Magebird

the chicks flock
to the edges of their
metal prison.

as the warden's daughter
watches miniature claws hook
onto the twisted metal,
she marvels at the beauty
of the distant relatives
of her former jailbirds.

she thinks of the cold winter prison
she once ran atop the hill.
the cold nipping at her cheeks
and the numbness in her toes
made her celebrate its closing
before spring's first thaw.

grabbing a piece of grass
from the lawn
her former captives

will never again see,
she listens to the
chorus of chirps.

the chicks cluster
at the edges of their cell
and eagerly steal
her peace offering
when she sticks
it through the fence.