

## Tim Gager – Featured Poet

### Five Poems



### Feature – Five Poems

#### Day One: The Day After

One eye, a closed dysfunction  
disfigurement , and hard stare  
please don't look, willing to  
accept—we sailed the open  
seas, invited trouble, waved  
on over whenever it was

when you felt lonely, you bled  
screamed, “What did I take” until  
it ended in your aftermath  
Mother, came over  
there was a search mission  
picking up the pieces,

the compounds the powders off the rug,  
the kitchen floor, each one a friend but,  
“Were they drugs?” mother asked.

You answer with a self-righteous—  
*dammit with a fist*, on the table.  
We all become disfigured

What's the answer?  
The question disappeared-  
The question appeared

In rehab, there was shame  
for 24 hours or 29 days shame,  
no shame, shame, no shame

## **Red Barn**

there is no reason  
to go inside the Red Barn  
no need  
suspicion  
perception

how we turn  
will make America  
want to call it as is:  
Blood on a meat hook  
hanging from an adversary

## **Bringing a Monkey to Work**

Pluto was his name  
He arrived on your back

We've reigned cats and dogs  
here: never a monkey

Careful, you tell the boss, he  
might rip off your hypocrisy

now you're facing the music.  
Human Resources said that

no one is allowed to throw feces  
around this office, unfit for human

employment—how short is life?  
You should leave

Pluto will always be with you.

## **The Truth About Pastels**

I don't see color  
but I see *color*

Fearless souls live in deep colors  
but wish for pastels, really,

soft in color comparison  
used to soothe the serious

seeking to spring out of a skin  
as oily as Craypas. How difficult

to understand that  
Sakura is a cherry blossom  
inside on the box with all  
the pastels you need

## **Still there Are Boxes**

If only we let go  
still images remain  
Pictures, boxes  
the photos fell

Leave them there  
the many and only like being  
trapped in a room full of people  
There's safety in a cage.

What provides the shade?  
There's still a single hair  
between my eyebrows  
One tree in the desert

**Timothy Gager** is the author of thirteen books of short fiction and poetry, including two novels. His latest *Chief Jay Strongbow is Real* his first book of poetry since 2014. He has had over 400 works of fiction and poetry published, of which eleven have been nominated for the Pushcart Prize. His work has been read on National Public Radio. He has hosted the successful Dire Literary Series in Cambridge, Massachusetts since 2001.