



poetrynow

"Relax / I tell them / you're inside / poetry now" —Julia Connor

My Feet in Good Dust

by Meg Withers

i.

If you could be
everything rooted,
the immediate prefix,
of multiplicity coupled...

ii.

would you be,
all slight creatures,
cupped, tender palms
and relative ease?.

iii.

We pass through
twilight shimmer,
flickering spirits,
toes and heels dusty
moving through
dwelling after dwelling

MEG WITHERS is the author of *Must Be Present To Win* (Ghost Road Press 2006). She won an *Open Windows* 2005 award, an honorable mention from *New Millennium Writings*, and has or will appear(ed) in: *American River Literary Review*, *The Bohemian*, *Poetry Now*, *Nimrod*, and others. She is currently seeking an MFA at San Francisco State.

Meg Withers reads at the Sacramento Poetry Center on Monday, January 22nd at 7:30pm.

president's message

Looking Back

2006 was an eventful year for SPC. We celebrated our first anniversary at HQ for the Arts, in a multi-media event where artists from *Asylum Gallery* were painting as poets were reading and musicians playing. But it's hard to identify just a few high points of a year where we had over 40 Monday Night Readings. Rebecca Morrison filled the house in December with a "Celtic Women" group reading. Tim Kahl brought Camille Norton up from Stockton for a superb reading in September. I was fortunate to host !X, Sac City's *Ethnic Theater Workshop*, in March, as well as a 2006 reenactment of Ginsberg's *Howl* by Michael Spurgeon's ARC class. We want to thank all the readers and all the hosts, with a reminder: come back in 2007! After many years of hosting, Stan Zumbiel took a break, so we've been lucky to have Tim Kahl taking on an active role in booking and hosting, as well as the work he does for the SPC blog. Indigo Moor will continue to host in 2007, and Rebecca will become a regular host in 2007 as well. If you're interested in being considered as a feature or co-feature reader, email us at poetrynow@sacramentopoetrycenter.org. Or just come for the popular and supportive open mic sessions that follow the featured readers—it's a good place to start.



HOWL REENACTMENT

SPC's Tuesday night workshop continues to thrive. According to Carol Frith, "The workshop members share a basic commitment to craft and to each other." Danyen Powell, who leads the program, says that "people new to the workshop regularly comment how impressed they are with the level of knowledge the body of the workshop has and how eager every one is to share that knowledge. The workshop is strong as ever with an average of 15 people attending." Looking to get feedback on your work from people eager to share? It's free every Tuesday – 7pm at the Hart Senior Center.

Getting SPC through year 27 (we'll turn 30 in 2009) took a lot of help from a lot of people. Our funding comes primarily from two sources—SPC members, and SMAC—the Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission. All the work—editing, hosting, moving chairs around, organizing workshops, and the activity

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INDIGO MOOR



Poetry Now, Sacramento's literary review and calendar, is published at least ten times a year by the Sacramento Poetry Center, and is funded in part with grants from the Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission.

Submissions of poems, artwork, reviews, and other work of interest to the Sacramento poetry community are welcome. Work must be accompanied by a SASE for return. Note that work submitted to SPC's publications may appear on SPC's website as well: www.sacramentopoetrycenter.org.

Please submit to 1719 25th Street, Sacramento CA 95814, or via email to: poetrynow@sacramentopoetrycenter.org.

Poetry Now is distributed in area bookshops, Sacramento County libraries, and by mail to SPC member-subscribers. If you are interested in receiving *Poetry Now*, or want multiple copies to share with others, please contact us at the above address.

Editor: Bob Stanley
Design: Richard Hansen
Contributing Editor: Tim Kahl



The Poet Tree, Inc., also known as **The Sacramento Poetry Center**, is a non-profit corporation dedicated to providing forums for local poets—including publications, workshops, and a reading series. SPC is entirely run by a volunteer board of directors.

Board of Directors (as of January 2007)

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(916) 979-9706.

Visit our website:

www.sacramentopoetrycenter.org



president's message

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formerly known as typing—is done completely by volunteers. We can always use help—if you want to get involved let us know. SPC's original mission was to help poets in the Sacramento area. After 27 years, we're still at it, supporting poets and writers in various ways, and looking to find new ways to help.

Thanks also to everyone who attended the annual fundraiser at the home of Mimi and Burnett Miller, and thanks to Mimi and Burnett most of all. Laverne and Carol Frith provided the poetic inspiration for the evening, and I had the opportunity to accompany local songstress Mary Zeppa on a few musical numbers. We raised over \$900—a big help at the end of the year when we are always thin on cash. A big holiday thank you as well to Brad Buchanan who organized our December gift wrapping fundraiser at Barnes and Noble. A good year, yes, thanks to a lot of dedicated people.



Getting SPC through year 27 (we'll turn 30 in 2009) took a lot of help from a lot of people.

Looking forward

2007 is here, and SPC has plans, ideas, and more work to do. Plan now to attend the **2007 SPC WRITERS' CONFERENCE**, which will be April 20-21, at our HQ home. Featured speakers and presenters will include Heather Hutcheson, Gail Entrekin, Brad Henderson, Andy Jones, Angela-Dee Alforque, and many other talented local writers and writing teachers. Those who attended SPC's last Conference in the fall of 2005 enjoyed the event, and felt it gave them new tools and new ideas for their writing practice. We're hoping to make this year's conference even better. We'll have all new presenters this year, but once again they will all be from northern California. This event isn't about "big name poets," it's about working in small groups with dedicated local writers. Check it out!

SPC is also planning a program to bring high school students to come and read their work at HQ for the Arts. We've had a number of college groups here in the last 5 years; students have come from ARC, SCC, and Sac State. Now we'd like to expand that "youth movement" to the talented local high-schoolers who write and perform poetry and spoken word. Watch for news in *Poetry Now* regarding a contest or group reading at SPC. Please let me know if you're interested in assisting with this program.

A living organization is like a poem (Billy Collins comes to mind) where you think it's going in one direction, but it takes you somewhere else. SPC is an organization in service of an art form and a diverse community of artists. As the form changes, and the community changes, we need to change and grow as well. Thoughts? Questions? Ideas? Contact us at poetrynow@sacramentopoetrycenter.org. And put SPC 2007 in the subject area. We look forward to your suggestions, whatever form they take.

— Bob Stanley, SPC President

two poems by Stacy Carniglia

Grand Forks A.F.B., July 4, '68

by Stacy Carniglia

There's Dee, sitting on gold-flecked
vinyl; her pale, curvy, Manet
pedal-pusher leg
swinging down to white lino,

another day measured by
Jose Feliciano, the Lettermen,
and a radio-contest call-in
quiz on Harry Truman.

We answer at 11:30;
no prize save the radio echo of
my upstairs voice
on the Princess extension phone,

not even a lime slush consolation
at A&W, a half-hour away. No, it's
New England Brand sausage,
white bread on magenta melamine

done up with green onions,
two wafflecreams;
the usual lack of nourishment,
not even from the encyclopedia

I balance with repro of
Girl At Open Door, Rembrandt;
maybe Great-Grandma blushed vermilion,
but I never will

Lilies, Considered

by Stacy Carniglia

There are lilies as variegated,
pumpkins as round,
robes as pinstriped

as when we met—

(even October light's the same)

bodies can still be spent,
hair appointments canceled,
puffed rice munched.

But now we live on

checkbook balances,
book harvests at the library,
days the other is gone—

(and we're happier then)

than now, as I hold
a shot of us
leaving an empty church—

(relieved)
in photosynthetic grays, white

The Way it is

by Pearl Stein Selinsky

The body give
little notice
when it begins
to implode:
cell by dying cell
which will not
regenerate.

It's time
as graying hair
refuses to turn
back
to blond or black
and skin begins
to shrivel,
elbow down to
wrist.

It's time
to look around,
take measure, see
the length,
horizon
stretching out,
a depth of sea
to meet,
a depth of sea
to swim.



The Book Collector

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PEARL STEIN SELINSKY was raised and educated in New York, and continued her education in California. After she retired from teaching in the Los Angeles School District, she moved to Sacramento, where she earned her Master's Degree in Creative Writing at California State University, Sacramento. While there, she won First Place in both the Bazzanella and Room of One's Own competitions, sponsored by the English Department. Her work has appeared in *Vintage 45*, *Poetry* (Chicago), *Ekphrasis*, *Zambomba*, *33 Review*, *Poetry Depth Quarterly*, *Tule Review*, *Rattlesnake Review*, and others, as well as in anthologies including *Only in Her Shoes*, *To Honor a Teacher*, and *The Sacramento Anthology: One Hundred Poems*. With her late husband, Victor Selinsky, she co-authored *Love and Other Complaints* for Rattlesnake Press. Victor passed away in April, 2005.

Pearl Selinsky reads at the Book Collector on January 10th at 7:30pm.

Sacramento literary calendar

www.sacramentopoetrycenter.org

january '07

4 Thursday

Poetry Unplugged at Luna's
Julia Connor, Sacramento Poet Laureate. 8pm. Luna's Café. 1414 16th Street. Hosted by Mario Ellis Hill. Open mic before/after. Free. Info: 441-3931 or www.lunascafe.com.

6 Saturday

First Saturday Poetry Series
 7pm. Sojourner Truth Art Center. 2251 Florin Rd. Hosted by Noah Hayes and Felicia McGee. All ages. \$5.00. Come early for workshop. Info: www.malikspeaks.com

Escritores del Nuevo Sol
Writing workshop and potluck. 11am. La Raza Galeria Posada, 1024 22nd St. Info: Graciela Ramirez, 456-5323 or joannpen@comcast.net.

7 Sunday

PoemSpirits
Geoffrey Stockdale. 6pm. Unitarian Universalist Society of Sacramento. 2425 Sierra Blvd. 2 blocks north of Fair Oaks Blvd, between Howe and Fulton. Co-Host JoAnn Anglin will offer a brief presentation on the work of poet-activist **Denise Levertov**. Info: Tom Goff, (916) 481-3312. www.uuss.org. Free. Open mic follows.

8 Monday

Sacramento Poetry Center
Board of Directors meeting. 5:45pm. HQ. 1719 25th St. All are welcome to attend.

Sacramento Poetry Center
Best of 2006: an Open Mic opportunity - 7pm. HQ. 1719 25th St. Hosted by Indigo Moor. Bring your best two pieces from last year and read them out loud! *Note the special start time.*

The Moody Blues Poetry Series
 8pm. "A Taste of Laguna" Southern Cuisine. 9080 Laguna Main, Laguna. Hosted by Ms. LaRue; Music by DJ Barney B. Open Mic. \$5 cover.

9 Tuesday

Sacramento Poetry Center
Poetry Workshop. 7:30pm. Hart Senior Center, 27th & J. Facilitated by Danyen Powell. Bring 15 - 20 copies of your one-page poem. Info: Danyen, (530) 756-6228

**All venues are located in
 Sacramento
 — area code 916 —
 unless otherwise indicated**



No SPC readings on January 1st or 15th.

10 Wednesday

Rattlesnake Press Reading
Pearl Stein Selinsky. 7:30pm. The Book Collector. 1008 24th Street. Hosted by Kathy Kieth. Celebrating the release of her new chapbook, *Vic & Me*. Read-around follows; bring your own poems or somebody else's. Info: kathykieth@hotmail.com

Mics and Moods
 10pm-midnight. Capitol Garage. 1500 K Street. Hosted by Khiry Malik. Features and Open Mic. 21+. \$5. Info: 492-9336 or www.malikspeaks.com

Radio show
Dr. Andy's Poetry & Technology Hour. 5pm. Host: Andy Jones. KDVS—90.3 FM or subscribe to podcast at www.kdvs.org.

11 Thursday

Poetry Unplugged at Luna's
TBA. 8pm. Luna's Café. 1414 16th Street. Hosted by Geoffrey Neill. Open mic before/after. Free. Info: 441-3931 or www.lunascafe.com.

Vibe Sessions
 8-11pm. Cobbler Inn. 3520 Stockton Blvd (next to Colonial Theater.) Hosted by Flo Real. All ages. \$5. Open Mic.

13 Saturday

Patricity's "In Spirit & Truth Series."
 3 to 5pm. 61 Yuence Smoked BBQ & Grill. 9657 Folsom Blvd (off Bradshaw.) Features plus Open Mic. Free. Info: 361-2014

The Moody Blues Poetry Series
 8pm. "A Taste of Laguna" Southern Cuisine. 9080 Laguna Main, Laguna. Hosted by Ms. LaRue; Music by DJ Barney B. Open Mic. \$5 cover.

14 Sunday

The Poet is a Thief of Fire
Frank Andrick, Becca Costello. With special guests. 6pm. The Book Collector. 1008 24th St. (between J & K Sts.) A benefit reading to help Frank with his medical costs. \$10. Info: 442-9295; richard@poems-for-all.com; www.poems-for-all.com

16 Tuesday

Sacramento Poetry Center
Poetry Workshop. 7:30pm. Hart Senior Center, 27th & J. Facilitated by Danyen Powell. Bring 15 - 20 copies of your one-page poem. Info: Danyen, (530) 756-6228

Bistro 33 Poetry Series
 8:30 pm. Bistro 33 in Historic Davis City Hall. 226 F Street (3rd & F), Davis. Open Mic after.

17 Wednesday

Mics and Moods features at Capitol Garage, 1500 K Street. 10pm to midnight. Features and Open Mic hosted by Khiry Malik.

Moore time for Poetry
Terry Moore. Access Television Show. 9pm. Co-host Tyra Moore. Access Sacramento, Channel 17.

18 Thursday

Poetry Unplugged at Luna's
TBA. 8pm. Luna's Café. 1414 16th Street. Hosted by Frank Andrick. Open mic before/after. Free. Info: 441-3931 or www.lunascafe.com.

Vibe Sessions
 8-11pm. Cobbler Inn. 3520 Stockton Blvd (next to Colonial Theater.) Hosted by Flo Real. All ages. \$5. Open Mic.

19 Friday

Raíces Latinas (Latin Roots)
Adrián Arias. 7:30pm. La Raza Galeria Posada. 1024 22nd St. MC and co-reader: **Jim Michael**. Adrián is a Spanish-language poet and graphic designer from San Francisco's Mission Cultural Center, who is also a graphic artist. (<http://adrian-arias.blogspot.com/>) \$5, but no one turned away for lack of \$. For info, call Graciela at 916-456-5323; more info at website: www.escriitoresdelnuevosol.com

20 Saturday

Underground Poetry Series
 7-9pm. Underground Books. 2814 35th St. (35th and Broadway.) Hosted by La-Rue. \$3. Open mic.

22 Monday

Sacramento Poetry Center
Meg Withers. 7:30pm. HQ. 1719 25th St. Hosted by Tim Kahl.

The Moody Blues Poetry Series
 8pm. "A Taste of Laguna" Southern Cuisine. 9080 Laguna Main, Laguna. Hosted by Ms. LaRue; Music by DJ Barney B. Open Mic. \$5 cover.

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24 Wednesday

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Mics and Moods
 10pm-midnight. Capitol Garage. 1500 K Street. Hosted by Khiry Malik. Features and Open Mic. 21+. \$5. Info: 492-9336 or www.malikspeaks.com

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TBA. 8pm. Luna's Café. 1414 16th Street. Open mic before/after. Free. Info: 441-3931 or www.lunascafe.com.

Mics and Moods
 10pm-midnight. Capitol Garage. 1500 K Street. Hosted by Khiry Malik. Features and Open Mic. 21+. \$5. Info: 492-9336 or www.malikspeaks.com

26 Saturday

"The Show" Poetry Series
Ike Torres (Sacramento slam team), **Izreal, Damnyo Lee** (L.A. slam) team. 9pm. Wo'se Community Center (Off 35th and Broadway.) 2863 35th Street. \$5. Info: T.Mo at 455-POET.

29 Monday

Sacramento Poetry Center
Kimberly White, Michael Pulley. 7:30pm. HQ. 1719 25th St. Hosted by Bob Stanley.

HERON'S RUN

By Sharyn Stever.
Rattlechap Chapbook Series #28,
Rattlesnake Press, 2006

Reviewed by Shawn Pittard

"Poetry at its best is the language your soul would speak if you could teach your soul to speak."

— Jim Harrison, from "Poetry as Survival" (collected in *Just Before Dark*).

The poems in Sharyn Stever's *Heron's Run* speak from the soul in a voice that is both strong and tender. Grounded in the Central Valley's lush landscape of rivers and wetlands, these poems are meditations on loss and hope and carrying on. They are also a testament to the power of good writing. Her poems are lyrical, imagistic, and metaphorical—as demonstrated by this collection's opening poem, "Persimmon Moon."

There's music in Ms. Stever's poems. I admire the way she employs the lyric tools of rhyme, slant rhyme, and repetition in "Persimmon Moon." She creates rhythm through variations of line length, punctuation, and line breaks. And like all good "plain song" poems, "Persimmon Moon" is deceptively simple in appearance, the hand behind its making almost invisible. This mastery of craft allows the reader to give their undivided attention to the poem's meaning.

"Persimmon Moon" is also an example of Ms. Stever's ability to invite the reader into the poem through intriguing first lines: "At odd times I am drawn/to the surprise of noticing/everything familiar." Other such first lines abound in this collection, among them: "The limit for mourning doves/is

twenty-seven this season,
and/you are home again yet
leaving." "When I torched
the aviaries,/it was worth all
the gold,/all the precious
gems I couldn't claim/to see
Montezuma's face." "He
says it's love, mornings/
when he returns from work/
and presses her shoulders to
the wall."

Deliverance

by Sharyn Stever

Waiting for my life
to resume, a deliverance.
Summer, long days and time,
the wait for validating gestures,
"How are you, dear?"
"Well, fine and not." The green
heron flies over the road
directionless as I but determined
nonetheless. Isn't it trust that holds
us steadfast to the living
elements of each day? The bird
moves its wings, a patent gesture of hope.
What he know about flight
isn't grace but survival,
a reason to go on searching
for the caress of the field and water.
It's a prayer for the living—
Listen for the swish
of air as the wings lift:
the small bird's heart cries out.

Persimmon Moon

by Sharyn Stever

At odd times I am drawn
to the surprise of noticing
everything familiar. Midway
Road, west toward the Interstate
and the full moon settling over
English Hills. Harvest moon,
a lighter shade of burnt orange
than its rise, no longer the
round-faced persimmon of evening.
I wonder where I was headed
as the moon passed over, the shining
silver-beams shooting through the skylight
at 3:00 a.m. I lay on my back wrapped
in the comfort of down, the warmth
almost too much to keep me from
the unknown schemes of a woman
sound asleep to herself but trying
to wake up. See how the darkness
tries to fill the room, how the moon
in the morning quickly steps down behind
the distant hill the way my body steps
away when sorrow blooms in its brightness
then says enough, enough. I am not
a mourner by nature. Still, I keep
imagining that moon against the sky,
a reflector of light as if a sage
were holding it in the grasp of wisdom—
Look, Look, see yourself.

In addition to sharing good first lines, Ms. Stever's poems exist in conversation with each other. They share a common language of words like hope, loss, guilt, trust, and grace. They exist in a shared landscape of roads, rivers, and silt, cottonwoods and cotton fields. Their many birds are her totemic alter egos, and like the green heron in "Deliverance," she is hopeful. Ms. Stever's writes "What he knows about flight/isn't grace but survival,/a reason to go on searching/for the caress of field and water." Her birds literally "lift" from the landscape as her spirit lifts figuratively.

Robert Frost wrote that the book itself is a collection's final poem. This is certainly true of *Heron's Run*. Kathy Kieth's Rattlesnake Press has produced an exceptional collection of work by a skilled and thoughtful writer. As always, production quality is high—including the cover art, a contemplative river scene by artist Angela Hanlon.

You can purchase Heron's Run at The Book Collector, 1008 24th Street, Sacramento, CA, or order it directly from Rattlesnake Press, 4708 Shade Tree Place, Fair Oaks, CA 95628. Price: \$5.

two poems by A.D. McCoy

All About You

by A.D. McCoy

Baby Girl,
saying 'sorry' for not being there
can never be enough,
but God knows I truly am.
You were only a year and a half
when I entered
The Belly of the Beast,
I was only twenty-one,
and now you are twenty...

Black tragedies are commonplace,
sadly, even expected,
but if there is a God,
then I know that what we endure
will not be all in vain...

We both had to swim
the ice cold waters
of struggle and pain.
Your mother
gave her power to drugs,
maybe they comforted her,
maybe they allowed her
to escape the realities of "Hood Life,"
and I wasn't there
to drag her to rehab.

Now I realize leaving you
caused a chain reaction.
I was the strong shoulder, the Steel Door
whose duty it was
to chase away the bad dreams,
the loneliness.

My absence left a black hole
in your space and time
that you sought to fill
in the crushing arms
of the street.

Never give up.
Never give your power away.
And know that you have in me
at least one man on this planet
who loves you.

Prison is...

A.D. McCoy

Prison is like a fiery furnace
Where the mettle of a man's soul
Is either refined or consumed,
And the quality of a man's character
Determines the kind of "metal" he possesses.
Rare are there souls of platinum, gold, or even silver.
But tin, aluminum, and copper far outnumber iron and steel.
I myself am steel, steadily mixing with gold,
As I endeavor to be a better man than yesterday.
And if I don't make it,
It won't be because I didn't try...

A.D. (AARON) MCCOY enjoys writing poetry and short prose, but he is currently working primarily on screenplays. In 2003 and 2004, A.D. had pieces published in the San Francisco Bayview newspaper, but this is his first piece in *Poetry Now*, and he would appreciate feedback from our readers. He writes "I love movies, and I'm a sucker for a good story." You can reach him via US Mail at: A.D. McCoy, D61772, Salinas Valley State Prison, PO Box 1050, Soledad, CA 93960.

frank andrick benefit

Frank Andrick has devoted his life to helping other people, from teaching poetry to troubled teenagers to promoting the arts across our community. Now, Frank needs our help. He was diagnosed with a range of serious health conditions in August, and at the same time learned that a paperwork error had wiped out his Medi-Cal benefits. A group of us is working to restore his health care coverage, but in the meantime we urgently need to form a safety net for Frank. Please join this community of Frank's friends, and friends of those friends, and anyone who believes in supporting a man who has always been a voice for the arts. There are two things you can do. Your support and presence at a poetry reading on January 14th would be greatly appreciated. Tickets are \$10, and sold at the door or online at www.poems-for-all.com. If you can't make it, donations are gratefully accepted at the same website or at the Book Collector. They can be sent or dropped off to 1008 24th St., Sacramento, CA, 95816.



On behalf of Frank, we thank you.
Edie Lambert, Gene Bloom, Richard Hansen

pn reviews

THE DOWNSTAIRS DANCE FLOOR

Taylor Graham, 2006

Winner, 2005 Robert Phillips Poetry Chapbook Prize

Texas Review Press.

Reviewed by Carol Frith

Perfect bound with a full-color, glossy cover designed by Paul Ruffin, *The Downstairs Dance Floor* is visually stunning, the cover art featuring pink roses drifting on a black background, roses that seem to suggest memory floating just above a Lethe of oblivion, apropos for the encoded, almost Proustian architecture of Graham's poems, a series of lyrical explorations into the nature and content of recollection, into the deep structure of memory and its inevitable disintegration. Dedicated in part to her parents, this chapbook opens with the poem, *The Dead Dancing*, in which Graham begins to reconstruct for us (and perhaps for herself) the story of her parents' life together as they took "...each other's hand in a wordless/foxtrot, measuring out the downstairs dance-/floor all those years./" Graham initializing the "measuring out" of her mnemonic structure by way of Terpsichore, the muse of dance, daughter, appropriately enough, of Zeus by the titaness Mnemosyne, personification of memory. *Sky-Blue Tiles*, an ekphrastic piece based on the "slick magazine photo" of a woman, explores the nexus of retentive and creative memory as Graham enters the photograph, wondering if the man at the table adjacent to the woman might be "Merlin, about to transform everything/into magnolias?/," those great, waxy blossoms heavy with recollective melancholy. In *Vandals*, memory becomes dreamlike and negatively transformative, "...x'es out connectors./," and "goes backwards, then repeats./"

Mnemosyne continues to give way to Lethe in *Longshoreman*, in which "All day you've been helping the old man/with his puzzle. ...," and, now, "...Missing pieces lie around/the edges, grouped by color, shape or/whimsy wherever they landed,/," the gradual deterioration of the recollective mechanism tracked by the unrelenting metaphor of a scrambled jigsaw puzzle. Interestingly, in *The Heroine Had She Lived*, Graham introduces the added dimension of a kind of anti-narrative intentionality into the deconstruction of affective recollection, wondering whether the poem's heroine may have, "...somewhere/before the final scene,...put memory/away, as not being worth the grief?/."

In the poem, *In Sympathy*, Graham receives a group e-mail announcing a death, to which all the responding condolences go out to everyone on the list, "...in lines that turn/and return in a ritual like rhyme,/," grief subsuming grief in a kind of communal construct of shared memory and mourning, each person's mnemonic images blending cumulatively with the next. In *The Stranger*, Graham reinvestigates artistic or creative memory, investing a portrait "...In oil on canvas/" with an affective construct all its own. "An eye preserved in oils/," she writes, "can watch forever./" Lethe re-engages Mnemosyne in *Sleeping Alone*, dream conflating now with memory and its disintegration: "You sleep alone, dreaming of a grandmother/you hardly knew/," and "...dream her toothless, gaping wordless/as a fish. ...," the dreamer's dream somehow

"...a series of lyrical explorations into the nature and content of recollection, into the deep structure of memory and its inevitable disintegration."



recollecting and reconstructing the decay of the lost grandmother's memory.

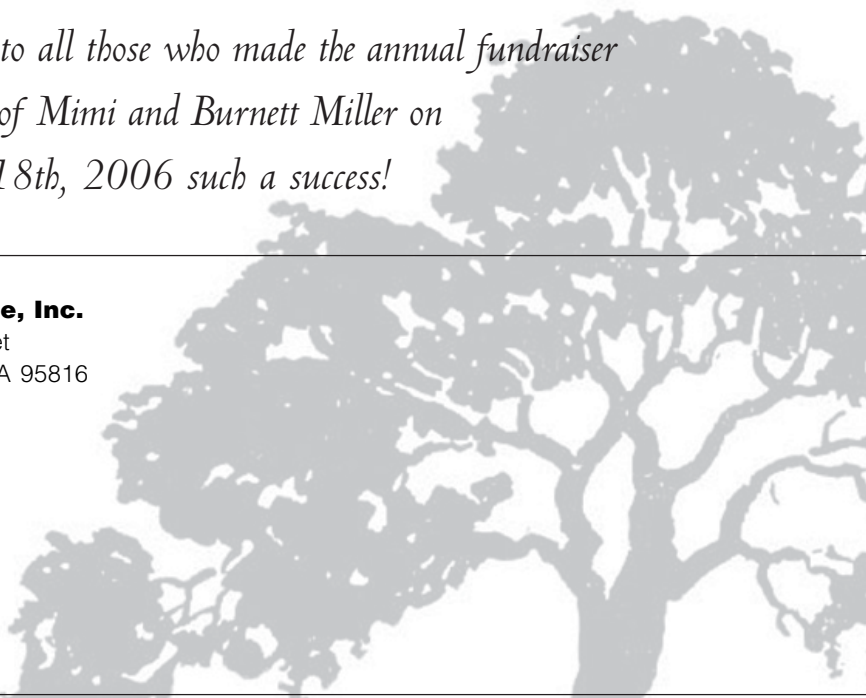
In *Petri Dish*, "A cultured ancestor has left/the dream-refinements of her breed:/some dregs of perfume in a blue Delft/bottle now, alas, in smithereens./," broken by an "obscurantist" grandchild, the Proustian Delft bottle, this dream/memory conflation, not so much destroyed as deconstructed and/or obscured by the inheriting present. The disintegration of memory continues apace in *Things To Do with a Person with Alzheimer's*, one such activity being to "Look Up Names In The Phone Book,/none of the names/their own./," text becoming, in this case, a kind of artificial memory. In *An Only Daughter*, all memory becomes text: "everything you cram into your brain/settles in your hooded smile/under a weight of texts. .../," the names and the activity of naming becoming at once the poet's own and not her own.

Graham returns to an examination of Coleridgean imagination/creative memory in *Jacaranda*. "Imagine/so we can't forget./," she writes, memory in this instance not so much associational as constructed. Compellingly, it is this manufactured and/or imagined kind of recollection that seems to offer the best proof against Lethe. Granted, this content may not always be readily retrieved. "In the morning," writes Graham in *Walking Your Dreams*, "you can't describe/the dreams that keep you moving./" In *A Woven Line*, however, a dreamer "...wakes from dreams of knots, or nets,/a sort of word-play in which lines entwine/into a sling for catching unstrung rhymes./," dreams in this instance seeming to serve—at least during sleep—as a mechanism for recapturing and restructuring sensation and experience. In *Death the Linguist*, dreams and affective recollection conflate into "some place I once was and somehow/got broken off from,/a place where all languages/are fluent and all genders agree./," dreamlike associatives the poet is "...almost gone enough/to understand. ...," death at once integrating and disintegrating the final mnemonic product. "I close my eyes," writes Graham, "and open/my lips to let the tongue/float free./"

The Downstairs Dance Floor is indeed "a place where all languages/are fluent.../," a place you will carry in your memory for a very long time after reading these fine poems. I recommend this chapbook highly.

The Downstairs Dance Floor is available at *The Book Collector*, 1008 24th St., Sacramento, CA, or from the author, Taylor Graham, P.O. Box 39, Somerset, CA 95684. It can also be obtained from Texas A&M University Press Consortium (www.tamu.edu/upress). Price is \$8.95 plus postage/handling.

www.sacramentopoetrycenter.org	january 2007 2006 was an eventful year for SPC <i>Looking ahead into 2007</i>	sacramento literary calendar & review 	<div> <div>poetrynow</div> <div>A PUBLICATION OF THE SACRAMENTO POETRY CENTER</div> </div>  <div>inside this issue</div>	poems by Stacy Carniglia, Pearl Stein Selinsky, Meg Withers, Sharyn Stever, A.D. McCoy <i>Carol Frith reviews Taylor Graham's chapbook</i> THE DOWNSTAIRS DANCE FLOOR <i>Shawn Pittard reviews Sharyn Stever's chapbook</i> HERON'S RUN <i>A look back, and a look forward by SPC President Bob Stanley</i>
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<p>This month at the poetry center/ HQ for the Arts at 25th & R</p> <p>January 22 Open Mic: Best of 2006 bring your two favorite poems and share HOSTED BY INDIGO MOOR</p> <p>January 22 Meg Withers HOSTED BY TIM KAHL</p> <p>January 29 Kimberly White Michael Pulley HOSTED BY BOB STANLEY</p> <p>no readings</p> <p>January 1st</p> <p>January 15th</p>	<p>check out the poetry center's blog at www.sacramentopoetrycenter.blogspot.com</p> <p><i>Thank you to all those who made the annual fundraiser at the home of Mimi and Burnett Miller on November 18th, 2006 such a success!</i></p> <p>The Poet Tree, Inc. 1719 25th Street Sacramento, CA 95816</p>  <p>The Poet Tree, Inc., also known as The Sacramento Poetry Center, is a non-profit corporation dedicated to providing forums for local poets—including publications, workshops, and a reading series.</p>
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