



poetrynow

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

The Poetry Center presents an evening with

Judy Halebsky Theresa McCourt

Monday, February 5th ■ 7:30pm

Along the Canal

by Theresa McCourt

Unmooring behind the backs
of coal-darkened warehouses,
small window after small window
cracked or smashed,

we saw the spoilage
the rusty pipes crisscrossed
over and under,
leaking corrosives.

Then the murky water seemed
to renew in a meadowy place,
with coots and moorhens calling.

The twilight returned starlings,
thousands swirling,
pouring themselves into the reeds.

That night, head against the stern,
I dreamt my first living creature,
a slate-eyed wolf, staring.

Thirty years later, I am parked
in a new, mostly empty lot:

And birds, just past dawn, rise and
fall on ground they cannot enter,
splinter the air into bits of black ash.

Theresa McCourt:

Born and raised in England, Theresa now lives in Sacramento. She has a B.A. in English Literature and Drama from Birmingham University, England, and an M.A., in English Literature from CSU Sacramento. She worked for the Legislature for five years and for the next eleven years ran her own business, Wordplay. In January 2007, she won a first in the Maggi H. Meyer Memorial Contest and in fall 2006 a first in the Ina Coolbrith contest. Credits include *Song of the San Joaquin*, *The Sacramento News & Review*, *mama-zine*, *Poetry Now*, *Rattlesnake Review*, *Toyon*, and *Night and Day*.

Thinned by Storm

by Judy Halebsky

You might think that *kamikaze* means suicide pilot but really it's a way of not saying something a way of counting what's missing

Kami – god
Kaze – wind
Divine wind
God of the wind
God of the trees

I'm counting on my fingers
on my toes
tracing the patterns on my skin
the blood lines, the needles, the nurses

worse than this the man on the radio says
is to be a parent to someone equally wounded

to my mother, I hand over the long nights
in pounds of salt, in gray canvas, in folded sheets

my swollen joints, layers of chalk skin
veins withered, leaves in the frost

I should protect her
I should tell her it doesn't hurt at all

instead I keep her with me
we walk in the late afternoon leaves
maple
elm
fall around us

JUDY HALEBSKY: Catch Judy read before she heads to New Hampshire for a residency at the MacDowell. Originally from Halifax, Nova Scotia, Judy now lives in Sacramento, working towards a graduate degree in Performance Studies at UC Davis. Her poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *The Five Fingers Review*, *Eleven Eleven {1111}*, and *Grain Magazine*.

Read a sample of Theresa's work:

www.poetsonline.org—"Marginalia/Billy Collins (September 2006)" in the archives section.

Read samples of Judy's work:

www.nevadacountyartscouncil.org/womenswriting/salonbio-JHalebsky.html

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)

Bob Stanley – President
Indigo Moor – Vice President
Tim Kahl – Secretary
Merrylee Croslin – Treasurer
Sandra Senne – Membership
Judy Halebsky – Member of the Board
Rebecca Morrison – Member of the Board
Martin McLroy – Member of the Board
Mary Zeppa – Member of the Board
Stanley Zumbiel – Member of the Board

Advisory Board

Burnett Miller, Anne Rudin, Julia Connor,
José Montoya, Luke Breit

Staff: Sandra Senne

Contact us at:

1719 25th Street ■ Sacramento, CA 95814
poetrynow@sacramentopoetrycenter.org
(916) 979-9706.

Visit our website:

www.sacramentopoetrycenter.org



february notes

We received over 350 poems by the December 15th deadline for the 2006 SPC Poetry Contest—winners will be announced in the March Poetry Now, with a reading at HQ on April 9th. Thanks for such an overwhelming response. Contest winners will be notified by mid-February.

Check out the High School Poetry Contest announcement, and share it with your local high school if you can. We expect an overwhelming response for this Free contest—a chance for the next generation of poets to step up and be heard!

— Bob Stanley, SPC President

Sacramento Poetry Center's first ever High School Poetry Contest

No cost to enter!

Deadline March 31, 2007

Limit of 3 poems per student

Send your poems to:

High School Poetry Contest
Sacramento Poetry Center
1719 25th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

- include an SASE (Self-addressed, stamped envelope) if you want notification of winners.
- poems should not have your name on them – include a **separate cover letter** with your name, address, phone and email address, and the titles of your poems. Also indicate the name of your school.

Prizes include:

- publication in either *Poetry Now*, or *Vyper*.
- scholarships to the 2007 SPC Writers' Conference (a one-day event on April 21st). All winners will receive an invitation to read their prize-winning work at the Sacramento Poetry Center in the Spring.

email submissions will be accepted:

- send to poetrynow@sacramentopoetrycenter.org
- put "SPC HS CONTEST" in the subject line.
- include above information sheet as the body of the email
- send each individual poems as an attachment—MS Word documents only.

Questions?

poetrynow@sacramentopoetrycenter.org

Good writing and good luck!

2 poems by Mokuo Nagayama

Rice-Planting

Leveling the soil
skies mirrored in the field
I wipe away sweat

Rosy clouds
shining ahead of
the planting machine

Sunset glows —
on the shore of the sky
I plant seedlings

Space

On the snow field
a white birch writes a poem
with its shadow

Spring thaw
white blanks emphasize
black rocks

MOKUO NAGAYAMA lives in Okayama Prefecture, Japan. Born in 1929, she has published poetry since 1976, as well as a prose piece, *Beyond the Bluish Smoke*, in 1976. This is her first appearance in *Poetry Now*.



The Book Collector

Books for readers & collectors since 1995
1008 24th Street ↪ Midtown Sacramento
Between J & K Streets ↪ (916)442-9295
Monday to Saturday 10 to 6 ↪ Sunday 11 to 4

Featuring a large selection of local poetry & small press

a poem by Angela Voelker

ANGELA VOELKER lives in El Dorado County and attends Union Mine High School. She writes: *I have been blessed with so many wonderful moments and memories in my lifetime that I often enjoy expressing through poetry [...]. I believe that writing connects to the soul.*

Where I am From

I am from days at the lake
With Mommy.
I am from a place where
Pets are family,
Where there is never a moment
When you are feeling cold.
I am from trees and leaves and flowers,
From the tear of clothing after climbing a Manzanita tree,
And the sting of dirt in the nose.
I am from those memories.

I am from nights laying on the lawn star gazing.
I am from singing the lyrics to Dean Martin
With Daddy.
I am from the joy and compassion December brings.
I am from boundless conversations with friends.
From laughing at Grandpapa's swearing,
(He always swears because he knows I get a kick out of it).

I am from a family whose love you can feel just from being
In their presence.
I am from my mother's truth-stretched stories that everybody loves.
I am from those countless arguments and times my brother and I fought,
And then coming to realize that we do actually love each other after all.
I am from a heaven I will never forget.
Where I explored an untouched forest
With a cold nosed companion.

I am from laughing and loving,
from learning and hugs — those special hugs
For no reason at all.
I am from my mother's smile, my father's humor,
My grandmama's creativity.
I am from my own wondrous faiytale.

Sacramento literary calendar

february '07

www.sacramentopoetrycenter.org

1 Thursday

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

3 Saturday

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.

4 Sunday

PoemSpirits
Jan Haag. 6pm. Unitarian Universalist Society of Sacramento. 2425 Sierra Blvd. 2 blocks north of Fair Oaks Blvd, between Howe and Fulton. Co-Host Tom Goff will also offer a brief presentation on the writings of **Michelangelo.** A professor in the Journalism and English departments at Sacramento City College, Haag is a prolific news reporter, copy editor and essayist. She advises on student publications, especially *Susurrus*, the award-winning SCC literary journal. She turned to poetry, and publishing of *Companion Spirit* (by LAMP Press), after the loss of her husband, and with her subsequent involvement in the Sutter Writers Program. Info: Tom Goff, (916) 481-3312. www.uuss.org. Free. Open mic follows.

5 Monday

Sacramento Poetry Center
Theresa McCourt and Judy Halebsky. 7:30pm. HQ. 1719 25th.

6 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

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

8 Thursday

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.

10 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

11 Sunday

Poetry Reading for Peace
Jose Montoya and Julia Connor. 5pm. The Book Collector. 1008 24th Street. Hosted by James Lee Jobe. Open mic Follows. Free. Info: Richard@poems-for-all.com

12 Monday

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

Sacramento Poetry Center
Couples: Valentine's Day reading. 7:30pm. HQ. 1719 25th. Hosted by Indigo Moor. An evening of Poetry Lovers. Hear readings by notable poetic couples: **Nora Staklis & Tom Goff; Christina & Art Mantecon; Erik & Terry; Laverne & Carol Frith** and more! Come and read with (or to) your poetic soulmate!

13 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.

14 Wednesday

Rattlesnake Press Reading
Brigit Truex. 7:30pm. The Book Collector. 1008 24th Street. Hosted by Kathy Kieth. Celebrating the release of the Placerville poet's latest chapbook, *A Counterpane Without.* And a littlesnake broadside from **Wendy Williams.** Read-around follows; bring your own poems or somebody else's. Info: kathykieth@hotmail.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.

Poetry in Davis
Emily Norwood, Gabrielle Myers, and Crystal Anderson. 8pm. Café Roma. 3rd & University. Presented by the UC-Davis Creative Writing program.

15 Thursday

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

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.

17 Saturday

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

Black History Month event
7-9:30pm. The Guild Theater. 35th & Broadway. Poets, dancers, vocalists, the BME tour and more.

19 Monday

Sacramento Poetry Center
No reading. 7:30pm. HQ. 1719 25th.

20 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

Adaptation and the Importance of Script and Story
Capital Film Arts Alliance presents author and screenwriter **Mary Mackey.** 7pm. HQ for the Arts. 25th & R. Mackey has sold feature-length screenplays and is the author of numerous documentary filmscripts, five books of poetry, and eleven novels.

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

22 Thursday

Poetry Unplugged at Luna's
Chris Olander and Bill Carr. 8pm. Luna's Café. 1414 16th Street. Hosted by BL Kennedy. Open mic before/after. Free. Info: 441-3931 or www.lunascafe.com.

Creative Writing in Davis
Fiction writer **Noy Holland.** 7:30pm. 126 Voorhies Hall, 1st & A Streets, Davis. Presented by the UC-Davis Creative Writing program.

24 Saturday

"The Show" Poetry Series
9 pm. Wo'se Community Center (Off 35th and Broadway.) 2863 35th Street. \$5. Info: T.Mo at (916) 455-POET.

26 Monday

Sacramento Poetry Center
Julia Levine and Kate Northrop. 7:30pm. HQ. 1719 25th.

27 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

28 Wednesday

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

Mundial experimental

A poetic look at the world by Tim Kahl

Introduction: Once again Somalia, that home to American military embarrassment, is in the news as the Christian Ethiopian army marches across the border to kick the followers of the Islamic Courts Council in the pants. But few people realize that Somalia is considered to be a “nation of poets” and that the nation’s history is littered with poetry as an intermediating force between rival factions competing for power. In a country where it is said that verbal damage to an enemy is more wounding than physical harm, it is as valuable to count a poet among your clansmen as it is a warrior. Indeed, literature is of such a central place historically in Somali culture that 19th-century British explorer Richard Burton described Somalia as

... teem[ing] with poets. Every man has his recognised position in literature as accurately defined as though he had been reviewed in a century of magazines — the fine ear of this

people causing them to take the greatest pleasure in harmonious sounds and poetic expressions whereas a false quantity or a prosaic phrase excite their violent indignation. Every chief in the country must have a panegyric to be sung by his clan, and the great patronize light literature by keeping a poet.

Historically, the effect of poetry is of mythic proportions. Somali legend has it that Salaan Arrabay, used his most well-known work “O Kinsman, Stop the War,” as an appeal to end a long-standing feud between two rival sections of the Isaaq clan in northern Somalia. Tradition has it that the poet on his horse stood between the massed opposing forces and, with a voice charged with drama and emotion, chanted the better part of the day until the men, smitten with the force of his delivery, dropped their arms and embraced one another.

Somalis also tell the story of an Ogaden chief who went to the tree of an enemy tribe and offered 114 poetic points of introduction and then another 114 points of argument, in honor of the number of chapters in the Qur’an. According to the legend, the chief spent days convincing the tribe that a negotiated peace was at hand, while actually keeping the enemy spellbound, buying time for his approaching warriors. By the hundredth point of argument, two days later—a performance played entirely from memory—he had lulled the opposing tribe to sleep; his army arrived and slew them.

Poetry in Somalia is a form of mass communication, and has always been central to mobilizing people in Somalia. Somali literature is ripe with examples of mobilizing large numbers of followers, such as Sayyid Muhammad Abdille Hasan Hasan was able to mobilize his Dervish army against the British and the Ethiopian Emperor Mennelik’s forces which immortalized him in British history as the “Mad Mullah.”

Project No. 1: Imagine yourself poised between warring factions [be it armies or persons] and make an appeal for peace at the flashpoint.

Project No.2: Imagine yourself as the mouthpiece of a military leader exhorting his followers to battle. You must use formal verse and poetic diction as means to announce public policy and move the masses, urging them to conform to the leader’s wishes. Can you encode a hidden message in the text that suggests the leader is whacko without bringing yourself into disfavor?

Materials and methods: Somali poetry is highly stylized and it consists of several different levels of formality. The highest form, that with the most prestige, is the classical form of *gabay*. It employs “vowel units” as the metric in composing the line. This “vowel unit” is called a mora. A short vowel sound is one mora. A long vowel sound is two morae (this could be established in English as well with its variance of short and long vowel sounds). A *gabay* must have 20 to 22 morae per line, as well as a pause between the 12th mora and thirteenth mora and two words per line that share the same initial letter. This alliterative sound must

then be sustained throughout the poem in each line. The *gabay* is used in formal political proclamations, during social debate, and as a part of religious and philosophical contemplation. It has the longest line of the formal verse forms; however, other forms, such as the *jufto*, use shorter lines. These forms are only to be used by men, but the *buraambur* is used by women for the same purposes of social and political engagement.

In contrast to these high forms of Somali poetry are the *bees* that are less complex but still formal in composition. These are usually employed as work songs for the nomadic population. Camels are watered two times per trip to the wells and the *bees geel* accompanies this task. A similar form is used for taking baby sheep and goats to wells as well as another form for adult sheep and goats. The weaving of mats, the pounding of grains and the churning of milk all have their corresponding genres. These poems often set the pace for this kind of work. Because nearly half of the population still exists as nomads, the virtues of the nomadic lifestyle versus the agrarian lifestyle have long been debated. This excerpt from a Somali poem, a nomad explains his decision to return to his herds after a brief try at farming:

continued on page six

continued from page five

Pierce the Sky

It is said that one cannot pierce the sky to get rain for one's garden,

Nor can one drive the farm, as one drives animals, to the place where the rain is falling.

Worst of all, one cannot abandon one's farm, even though barren, because all one's efforts are invested in it.

The farmer, in counter argument, replies:

A man with no fixed place in this world cannot claim one in heaven.

Project No. 3: Consider writing a work song for a nomad. While this may be difficult for the normal householder in an industrialized nation to imagine, try thinking of tasks that require a lot of wandering around and searching in order to complete them. For me, one kind of task that requires endless peregrinations is the act of fixing things. Often this kind of task requires searching for the broken parts and then searching for the right parts or resources that will allow me to fix the item. I often find myself moving from room to room looking for that object that will serve as temporary/near-permanent fix before I eventually decide to throw the item out. So, is the ballad of Mr. Fix-it really a nomad's work song? If you've ever wandered the house in search of wire or duct tape or super glue, you'll know what I mean.

DEVIN FARREN is a local songwriter who has recently finished a chapbook of travel poems entitled "Places You've Already Been". He holds a B.A. in English from Humboldt State University and this is his first publication. His work is available through his website, www.devinfarren.com.

stop here

By Devin Farren

When I flip through the pages of a thin, soft-covered poetry book with a black and white picture of a field and a couple dogs standing in the rain

I go straight for the poem that looks like this one. In the beginning, I'm not interested in the poet's degree of wit

or impressive use of rare vocabulary. I want something short that admits a personal habit or a self-prescribed "short coming".

I want to see myself standing in one of the third lines, an unsure yet self-proclaimed poet, trying to prove he's not alone.

Nocturnal Drifter

by Blair H. Allen

Shadow apparition, voice of night,
echo moon in nomad mind,
world-defining music circling inside him.
"That's the way it goes..." mumbling,
turning the last twenty years over, depleted soil.
Seems not much growing on top,
except memoirs from roving, the terrain almost
remembered as dreams, still there,
like him, wandering the edge of peripheries.
Sustenance not grand monde, more imaged
in grit and dust, bitter wind writes the words,
and before ink hits paper, temporarily
blown away, nothing lost except a few scribbles,
cryptic in the wind, imitating
the future, the past hanging on to him,
worn like a coat, dust a familiar long layer,
settles on debts uncollected.
Surviving the night groping across arch-acheland,
his dawn eludes his wait and reach,
left in darkness relentless as cold streets
with the lights shot out.
A few remain, illuminate what needs to be
done... lists half-completed,
tufts of wild green growing from seeds dropped
into footprints limping toward dreams.
He hopes it rains enough long after he fades away.

Winter Love in Decipherable Ice

by Blair H. Allen

Consequence of sequence
 chase
 inexplicable
Innumerable paths
 ice-paved on stone
The arches hold
 the garden still
 mimicking mimes
Seemingly frozen indifference
 cold syllables
 all she wanted to say
Then slips on the path
 waiting to be caught
Incorrect and
 inconceivable
Ghost soft as snowflakes held
 to steady in his hands
Rising steam from frost pond
 red lips parting
 for her breath
Spring arrived early in February
 given with a story
Scheherezade with her
 veil dropped
A dream of honeyed nectar
 so close to fruition
 awakened out of reach
Her tale left in his soul
 about a dawn
 of vanished veils

Turf Daisies and Dandelions

Poetry by Jane Blue
Rattlechaps Chapbook Series #29
Rattlesnake Press, 24 pgs. 2006.

Reviewed by Charlene Ungstad

There are moments. As passenger in a pick-up at a red light, I once saw a Greek goddess in a near transverse crosswalk. Far too thin, track marks on translucent arms, she stopped sound and time as she passed. Her profile belonged safe on a pedestal in a museum, and her kohled eyes stared into a plane I sensed only by the way she was locked into it. In James Cameron's film, *The Abyss*, Lindsey Brigman tells an imperiled crew in an underwater rig hovering on the edge of a precipice that they've arrived at a moment requiring "new eyes." Engineer Lindsey and estranged husband/crew commander Virgil meet crisis upon crisis to regain the surface just as Virgil guides Dante through circles of hell into dream and forgetfulness toward Easter morning. Virgil and Lindsey even die for each other and resurrect to save an emerging world by learning to see clearly the era changing around them.

In the 1920s Franz Roh coined the term "magic realism" for German art's return to the figural that forced the viewer to notice the magic of the ordinary world. Though he retired the term in the late 50s, it had jumped species to literature and evolves to this day. I wish to apply his original meaning to *Turf Daisies and Dandelions*. Jane Blue's little book is deceptively, charmingly, deftly subversive. A quiet sense of menace beneath a description of our civilization unfolds on every page. Jane allegorizes and spins meaning from observations of the material and concrete. She does it with humor, a challenging intellectual depth, and a cultural/intuitive resonance one hopes for when turning any first page.

"Or Like a Broken Bone" is a dream of a city destroyed to be rebuilt again and again. Whatever is wrong happened "before the flood" and our seer/dreamer has "no conscious thought of prophesy." A modern American consumer, she observes from distance that's physical, temporal, emotional. The empty desert city implies lost origins and a desire to understand civilization. The emptiness Blue describes calls up, first, that our cities have long been ailing, such an isolation built into them that many residents might as well be living in deserted towns. Second, the poem reveals a current, ubiquitous state of war so sanitized for corporate media that one artist projected giant photos of children mutilated by the fighting onto walls in malls and neighborhoods to "let their restless ghosts that endlessly wander [the web] ... "find peace and haunt those who pretend not to know what was going on." (boingboing.com)

"The Ottoman Empire" skims images of land mass, mythology and the Middle East. The author almost immediately questions her own voice ("What do I know of life?"), but an earlier line break between "ottoman" and "empire" has allowed her to summon the October wind and put herself in charge. Like

Demeter, she anticipates cycling seasons and fertility; from a comfortable, wondrous position she enjoys anticipation of a later feast. Like Persephone, she is apparently with her consort at this part of the cycle, but it isn't polite to be certain. She returns, she says, always.

"The Nest," for her sister, Paula, asks how—and what—does one communicate? She begins with the weather, time-honored subject of small talk. Between observations of nature, she asks, "What am I? Half done or half undone?" She likens the two of them to the weeds of the book's title. The daisy—symbol of innocence and diviner of love ["...loves me, loves me not"]—and the evergreen, nutritious dandelion—a sun symbol we all wish upon once it's gone to seed. They abide and bloom abundantly. With "pale lavender stars of wild onions just beginning" she returns her self and her other, new and shining, to the mirroring sky.

There is a lot of traveling here—on the bus, in time, through life's passages, from one viewpoint to another. And trees flourish everywhere... The one in "Tupelo" cycles its colors behind blinds pink (as sunset? sunrise?) We sometimes move through childhood's window, but "All memory is fiction." From the Middle Ages, to a life-change bus, to another mother and daughter caught in blurring identities as they fall, to a fallen woman rewinding the scene, to a neighbor trying to kill a tree who does not outlast that tree, we find ourselves following surviving root lines from one phenomenological puzzle to another. "Sonnet" is a memory garden, lit by post-modern speculation, watered by ecstatic theosophy and Brownian intuition. Who remembers us when we're gone; is existence ever individual? The reader joins a risen mob to wander as tourists among the questions marking our way much as the scattered headstones that trace their completed lives.

Jane Blue is an embedded journalist reporting life at a local café, on public transport, or the lobby of a Target. Her dispatches cross the grand spiraling floes Yeats worried about as civilizations clumsily change gears. She plays the light of language over a changing mindscape to expose various phenomena of our new world from the illusion of inconsequence. In these poems, image glides across tumbling facets—lichen into mothers into redbuds leaning into a country road into trees decimated in Kabul for firewood daring to come back... Maybe we will pick our way around the empty center, that eternal moment her teacher wanted her to photograph. Do not buy this book, do not open its pages, unless you want to hear tree music, run in the sky, grant a polyphonic wish or admit to magic wafting skywise like pollen from millions of glorious weeds.

SPC's first ever high school poetry contest

poetrynow

sacramento's literary calendar & review



A PUBLICATION OF THE SACRAMENTO POETRY CENTER



TONIGHT!
POETRY AT HQ
SACRAMENTO
POETRY
CENTER
READING
7:30PM•FREE
EVERY MONDAY!

inside this issue

poems by

**Theresa McCourt, Judy Halebsky,
Mokuo Nagayama, Blair H. Allen,
Devin Farren, Angela Voelker**

Charlene Ungstad reviews Jane Blue's chapbook

Despite and Because and other Phenomenologies

Tim Kabl's Mundial Experimental:

Poetic forms of Somalia: Yes, you can try this at home.

spc blog: www.sacramentopoetrycenter.blogspot.com

February 2007
Readings at SPC/
HQ for the Arts

February 5
Judy Halebsky
Theresa McCourt

February 12
Nora Staklis & Tom Goff
Christina & Art
Mantecon
Erik & Terryl
Laverne & Carol Frith
Poetry Lovers—notable
poetic couples —
a Valentine's Day
special reading.

February 19
No reading

February 26
Julia Levine
Kate Northrop

poetscornerpress.com

Chapbook Poetry Contest

Winner will be announced June 1, 2007. Send manuscript of 24 text pages of poetry with \$20 reading fee—check or money order made out to: Poets Corner Press (8049 Thornton Rd. Stockton CA 95209.) Deadline for submission March 1, 2007.
poetscornerpress.com

Judge:
Camille Norton
winner of the National Poetry
Series Contest will judge the
First Place Award of \$500.00

looking ahead:
March 5:
Angela James
presents a night of
storytelling, poetry
and dancing.

The Poet Tree, Inc.
1719 25th Street
Sacramento, CA 95816

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.