



poetry now

June 2008

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

Getting Started

Theresa McCourt

Gimpy, ragged,
shifting
from stillness to motion,
relearning after so many repeated efforts,
that breath will even out,
that heart, after the initial flurry,
will recover an even beat,
that hips and knees
will be anointed
a certain distance from the house.

After one or two miles,
the Achilles will even shed
its shadowy film of scarring,
grown anew
from one night of stiffening sleep.

Since first stepping onto the road,
twenty-four years ago,
I've listened to so many of my grumblings,
a variety of complaints—
all of them reciting
what can't be done,
what I could be doing instead,
what I'm not capable of.

Theresa McCourt

Theresa McCourt is a transplant from Manchester, England. She has a BA in English Literature and Drama from Birmingham, England, and a MA in English Literature from CSU Sacramento. While in business for herself, Theresa taught writing and wrote freelance articles for national and local magazines and newspapers, including an eight-year run as a biweekly columnist for *The Sacramento Bee*.

On May 14 of this year, she was awarded the Albert and Elaine Borchard Fellowship in poetry for the 2008 Tomales Bay Workshops through the University of California, Davis, Creative Writing Program. In January 2007, her poetry won a 1st place recognition in the Maggi H. Meyer Memorial Contest and in fall 2006 she won a 1st in the Ina Coolbrith Poetry Contest. In 2005, she won a 3rd in the 79th Annual Berkeley Poets' Contest. In March 2007, she received an honorable mention in the Sacramento Poetry Center's poetry contest. Credits include mamazine.com, *Brevities*, *Poetry Now*, *Song of the San Joaquin*, *Rattlesnake Review*, *Toyon*, and *Night and Day*. In 2007 and currently in 2008, she has been part of the Artist Residency Institute, through the Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission.

Appearing June 2, 2008 for the Poetry Center at Time Tested Books -- **Theresa McCourt** reads. Performances by contemporary violinist **Sasha Tkacheff** and **C-Sus Vocal Jazz A Capella Group** with **Bob Stanley**. 1114 21st St.
<http://sacramentopoetrycenter.blogspot.com>

Poetry Now, Sacramento's literary review and calendar, is published 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. Note that work submitted to SPC may also appear on SPC's website as well: sacramentopoetrycenter.org.

Please submit to SPC, 1719 25th Street, Sacramento, CA 95816, or email to PoetDawn2008@aol.com

Poetry Now is distributed in area bookshops, Sacramento County libraries, and by mail to 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, or call SPC at 979-9706.

Editor: Frank Graham

Poetry Editor: Dawn DiBartolo

Contributing Editor: Tim Kahl

Interviews: Lisa Jones

Book Reviews: Emmanuel Siguake

Design Editor: Elizabeth Krause

Calendar Editor: Aaron Gerwer

Please submit events to be listed on the calendar to aarondscrub@yahoo.com

The Poet Tree, also known as the Sacramento Poetry Center, is a non-profit corporation dedicated to providing forums for local poets – including publications, (Poetry Now and Tule Review), workshops, special events, and an ongoing reading series. Funded primarily by members, SPC is entirely run by a volunteer board of directors. We welcome your input and your interest.

Board of Directors (as of Jan 2008)

Bob Stanley, President

Tim Kahl, Vice President

Rebecca Morrison, Secretary

Sandra Senne, Treasurer

Frank Graham, Member at large

Mary Zeppa, Member at large

Stan Zumbiel, Member at large

Brad Buchanan, Member at large

Elizabeth Krause, Member at large

Contact us at

1719 25th Street, Sacramento CA 95816

bobstanley@sbcglobal.net

916-979-9706

Or visit our website at

www.sacramentopoetrycenter.org.



**Sacramento
Metropolitan
Arts Commission**

president's message

Please note that two of our Monday readings in June will be at **Time Tested Books** – June 2 and June 30th

But also note that Headquarters for the Arts now has air conditioning, so please come down for the readings this Summer – there's a great line-up of events on the other Monday nights.

As always, I have many people to thank, but I'll pick **Emmanuel Siguake**, the newest SPC board member, who will begin hosting readings (second Mondays) in July, **Art Mantecon**, who just completed a series of six remarkable events this month, and **Elizabeth Krause**, who has been doing the "paste-up" of PoetryNow for the last six months, and will be departing for Iowa in July. And thanks to the members and friends of SPC, who have been showing up in great numbers through the year.

Bob Stanley

Tract Housing Carol Louise Moon

This hot afternoon is buzzing with some kind of noise as I race the old blue pickup truck across the dust past white pipes lying in the field. I see a red and white fox darting from under a fence into a nearby shrub.

6 year old Billy Kondrat tells me that foxes are descended from dinosaurs, and that he, too, has seen this particularly odd creature "making like a fox, yet being cleverly dinosaurian."

Unloading a few groceries is tedious; I'd rather visit Ricardo, the next door neighbor who has proudly unloaded three old refrigerators onto his carport. I skip the fence to get a closer look at him folding his short-sleeved shirts neatly into a beige refrigerator.

As Ricardo croissantly folds poorly washed socks which smell a hint of cheese, I think to myself food does not belong here. I mouth the words in English and mime the words with my fingers, One must not freeze cheese, before noticing the lack of electrical source to each refrigerator.

Glancing across the field I see the yellow lab chasing the red fox. He, too, has heard the rumor that perhaps the fox is a dinosaur.

Carol Louise Moon is a NorCal poet, published in *BREVITIES*, *RATTLESNAKE REVIEW*, *POETRY NOW*, *UPDRAFTS*-winner March 2007 Third Place Chaparral Poets monthly Contest. Affiliated with Sacramento Poetry Center, and President of the newly formed El Camino Chapter of Cal. Fed. Chaparral Poets.

Memoirs of a Lonely Ear

Carol Louise Moon

A house cast in shadows
A stuck door
A cold door knob
A sad dove song

Molded memories linger
in my inner ear.
Your voice whispers
through satin cobwebs.

I long for your
mournful embrace
and fall inward toward
a mantel of dusty bricks.

ROOM TO WRITE

Room to Write is a new school of creative writing, based at the home of the Sacramento Poetry Center at 25th and R Streets. Our classes are led by experienced poetry teachers who have many years of experience in leading workshops for writers. Summer classes begin the week of June 18th. If you've wanted to give yourself time to write, find a writing group, or work on pieces already in progress, the classes offered at Room to Write will give you the incentive to work, and a community of writers to support you.

Classes now forming for Summer 2008:

Poetry Writing Workshop – Wednesdays 7:00 to 8:30pm

led by Bob Stanley

Teen Poetry Writing Workshop – Thursdays 10:30 to noon

led by John Allen Cann

American Poets of the late Twenties - Thurs. 7 to 8:30 pm

led by John Allen Cann

To register, or for more information on **Room to Write**, call Bob Stanley at 916-240-1897, or email Bob at bobstanley@sbcglobal.net.



Sean Johnson & Brooke Barker *interview* Billy Collins

Enjoy the Ride: A Brief Conversation with Billy Collins

"It's time for me to put on my poetry cape," Billy Collins quipped a few minutes before beginning his lecture at Brigham Young University on Leap Day, slipping into his sports coat. After the lecture ended and before his poetry reading began, we had a chance to sit down with the former U.S. poet laureate and ask him some questions. Fifteen minutes into the interview he began to lose his voice—he was sick—so we cut the questioning short and went to buy him a pack of lemon-flavored Ricola cough drops.

Charles Simic describes poetry as "words making love on the page like flies in the summer heat." A high school teacher called it "the string quartet of literature." What's your poetry definition?

Kenneth Koch makes the distinction between prose and poetry when he says that prose is "no dogs allowed on the beach" and poetry is "no dogs or logs allowed on the beach—no poodle however trim, no dachshund unable to swim." So what you have there is playfulness. I would say it's language at play, language enjoying itself—more than it does in any other genre.

Is this Baudelaire quote an overstatement? "Any healthy man can go without food for two days—but not without poetry."

I think it's an overstatement. I'd say two weeks would be more realistic. [Laughter.] Poets tend to lift poetry up. It's like that William Carlos Williams thing about men dying for the lack of poetry everyday. People can get along fine without poetry—and do. I don't think they know what they're missing, though, because what they think they're getting along without is usually a misconception based on bad teaching they had in high school. I think once people realize that poetry is actually about them—that it's not the musings of this group of weirdos, that it's actually about them being human—then they can walk into it without fear.

A similar question: how about Shelley's statement that "poets are the unacknowledged legislators of mankind"?

With the emphasis on *unacknowledged*. [Collins laughs]

Is that too grandiose of a statement? What do you think the poet's role is, if there is such a thing?

I think it's a dated statement. Poets in some cultures are much closer to the center of culture and tend to speak more for the people. In America poetry has been largely marginalized and poets are either ignored or distrusted. They certainly aren't legislators. You know, it came out at some point in Eugene McCarthy's political career that he wrote poetry, and it was like saying, "I'm a felon and I like to rob stores at night, but I'd still like you to vote for me."

That's interesting. It's okay for politicians to play music or practice other arts but not to write poetry.

That is interesting. They could probably play—the cello would probably arouse some suspicions. Bill Clinton plays the saxophone and that's okay, and Harry Truman played the piano, but if you said you played the recorder or the flute—it depends on the instrument.

What role does humor play in your poetry, and in poetry in general?

A central role. I think of humor as a device, and also as a way of looking at things. It works as a device to sometimes disarm readers, or to relax them. But I think it's impossible to try to be funny on paper. It's a natural reflection of how you see the world. You either have a sort of skewed, slanted take on things—and you are always looking for incongruities and humorous possibilities—or you don't. Humor was really not allowed in poetry after Wordsworth, basically, until maybe around the time of Philip Larkin. But I think it's reclaimed its place in poetry.

There seems to have been a great influx of really funny poets, like James Tate, the New York School, Mark Halliday, Dean Young—do you think poetry was hungry for humor?

I do. That's a good point. I think there's almost *too* much of it now. There's a whole bunch of jokesters out there. You expect them to be not just humorous but kind of wacky, with a nutty take on things.

It's fun to read.

It is. I think you're right. There was a hunger for it because it had been actually suppressed in poetry. But now the humor dogs have been let loose.

David Lehman writes about “the widening gap between the academic and the nonacademic literary communities” and says that critics have “turned their backs on the wider literary public and abandoned their proper mission” to illuminate works of literature, make them accessible, and assess their value. You’ve written about “the trouble with poetry”; what’s the trouble with poetry criticism?

I think a lot of poetry criticism is not so much criticism as—well, I guess we have to distinguish between poetry criticism and poetry reviewing. I think most poetry reviews are very soft-headed. There's not enough teeth in them. One critic whom I'm thinking of—I don't think he's a tremendously insightful critic, but he's made a real reputation for his nastiness because so few reviewers are taking an opposed stance or being very critical.

As far as theory or literary criticism goes, I think poets like Dean Young, David Kirby, and Mark Halliday nicely elude the snares of theory and critical attention because of that kind of jokiness or goofiness about them.

That's interesting. John Ashbery was quoted as saying he wanted to write a poem that critics couldn't say anything about. I wonder if that's why his name pops up so seldomly in undergraduate literature classes.

When you're studying poetry as an undergraduate you're often limited to what the anthologies are carrying. But also I think a lot of teachers wouldn't know how to handle Ashbery. I'm not sure I would. I mean, I'd be able to talk about him to *some* degree. At first I tried to “figure him out,” but then I realized that's not the way to do it. What he's presenting is a kind of a ride or a comic series of “shifts.” I love to read him now, but I just kind of—

—enjoy the ride?

Yeah, enjoy the ride.

Sean Johnson, from Sacramento, is a student at Brigham Young University. He is the winner of an Academy of American Poets College Prize and the Western Regional Honors Council Award for Poetry.

Brooke Barker, from Plymouth, Minnesota, is also a student at Brigham Young University. She is a French major with a special interest in the poetry of Charles Baudelaire.

MORPHEUS AND SNOW*Ela Banerjee*

One day,
 I will send you a piece of
 this paper world.
 I will cut out a square of this
 tissue sky,
 slip it in an envelope,
 and in your night-drenched yard,
 you will feel its
 thinness
 and you will taste my kiss,
 glued childishly
 to a falling star.

One day,
 you will think of me again
 and you will send to me
 a memory of our
 old world.
 Sitting by this shallow ocean's sand,
 I will press its warmth
 against my eyes,
 against my eyes,
 until it burns out,
 its ashes washed away by
 these artificial waves.

One day,
 the canvas of this world will
 split
 and I will push a dream
 out through the cracks,
 out of this illusion,
 like Venus rising from the sea.
 My dream will dance
 again
 through the real night,
 will race through
 the streets
 and neighborhoods
 I used to walk down.

As I close my eyes,
 in this paper world,
 my dream will find you,
 asleep,
 in the world
 where I used to live
 and speak
 and laugh
 and love.

My dream will slip its hand
 in yours,
 and I will know
 your face again.
 One day.

S
P
C

H
I
G
H

S
C
H
O
O
L

P
O
E
T
R
Y

AN ODE TO LAST NIGHT'S DANCE*Keaton Boyle*

When music plays and lights turn off,
 Do people change or take their masks off?
 Or put them on so maybe they
 could find what's underneath?

Accelerate the social scene,
 The way he sees, the way she gleams,
 They way she now fills up his dreams
 of how life could proceed.

Some parade and some play games,
 And some choose only to refrain
 from anything so perilous as fame.
 But some remain...

The catalyst, the Eucharist, the spontaneous synthesis of
 rhythms...

beats and hints of blues
 loud guitars and high-heeled shoes
 the writhing pit of gossips' news
 and on the outside me and you

Together...
 Dancing...
 Holding...
 closer...

It's more pure here –in your arms.
 Music plays here –in your arms.

And though it's cliché here and I am afraid here and I know
 it's the subwoofers
 shaking my brains here,
 I'm joyful to be here with you.

Together.
 Tonight.
 In love.

Sacramento Area Literary Calendar
June 2008

Mon, 6/2, 7:30pm-- Theresa McCourt reads.
Performance by contemporary violinist Sasha Tkacheff
and the A Capella group C-Sus with Bob Stanley; F.D.
Graham hosts, at Time Tested Books, 1114 21st St.,
Sac – SPC hosts a reading every Monday nite.

Tues, 6/3 7:30 pm and every Tuesday: SPC Poets'
Workshop @ the Hart Cntr, 27th/J sts. Danyen@ 530-
756-6228 FREE bring 15 copies of your one page poem
to be read/critiqued.

Every Tuesday 7 p.m. - "Life Sentence" poetry reading
and open mic. The Coffee Garden, 2904 Franklin Blvd.,
Sac. <http://www.myspace.com/lifesentenceshow>

Wed, 6/4 8pm Mahogany Poetry Series, and every Wed
nite at Queen Sheba restaurant @ 1704 Broadway, with
Khiry Malik M., Slam, open.

Wed, 6/4 The Bistro, 3rd and F Streets in Davis, 1st and
3rd Wednesdays. Free. 530.756.4556
aojones@ucdavis.edu
http://www.bistro33.com/bistro33_davis for schedule

Thurs, 6/5 and every Thurs 8pm, Open Mike and
featured poet at Lunas Café -- Feature TBA
Sat., 6/7 and every 1st Sat- Rhythm N Rhymes:
open mike, webcast & filmed for public TV @ Butch N
Nellie's,
near corner of 19th & I. myspace.com/RNRshow

Sat., 6/7 Galleria Posada open mike 1024 22nd St. in
Spanish and English 916.456.5323 916.446.513346-
1324 fax
www.larazagaleriaposada.org
larazagaleria@sbcglobal.net

Mon, 6/9 - 7:30 p.m. FD Reeve & Al Garcia read at
SPC, at 25th and R. Asylum Art Gallery. Free. 916-979-
9706. <http://www.sacramentopoetrycenter.org>.

Tues, 6/10, 7:30 pm and every Tuesday: SPC Poets'
Workshop @ Hart Cntr, 27th/J sts. Danyen@ 530-756-
6228 FREE bring 15 copies of your one page poem to
be read/critiqued.

Wed, 6/11, 7:30pm --Rattlesnake Press, a new
chapbook by James DenBoer (Day Moon) and a
littlesnake broadside from Carol Louise Moon, a brand-
new issue of Rattlesnake Review (#18) at The Book
Collector, 1008 24th St., Sac Free
kathykieth@hotmail.com or 916-442-9295.

6/16 Susan Kelly-Dewitt reads from The Fortunate
Islands and other poems – at SPC HQ 1719 25th St.
Rebecca Morrison hosts.

Tues, 6/17, 7:30 pm and every Tuesday: SPC Poets'
Workshop @ Hart Cntr, 27th/J sts. Danyen@ 530-756-
6228 FREE 15 copies of your one page poem.

Sun, 6/22, 11am-1pm. El Camino Chapter of CA FED
Chaparral Poets
meets at the Hart Cntr,
27th /J Sts, bring 10 copies of your poem for critique.

Mon, 6/23, 7:30—James Lee Jobe, Tim Kahl hosts at
SPC, 1719 25th St.

Thursday, June 26th
Poetry Unplugged at Lunas 1414 16th St. SAC
Featuring:Bob Stanley, Mary Zeppa and Will Staple

Mon, 6/30, 7:30-- Stephen Kessler, author of 8 books,
and Jeff Knorr read with SPC, at Time Tested Books,
1114 21st St., SAC, <http://stephenkessler.com>

Tues, 6/29, 7:30 pm and every Tuesday: SPC Poets'
Workshop @ Hart Cntr, 27th/J sts. Danyen@ 530-756-
6228 bring 15 copies of your one page poem to be
read/critiqued. FREE

COMING SOON: July 7, Asian Forms Poetry @SPC

B60

Simon Perchik

The dead are already holding hands
and what's left they share
as memories -- in the meantime

who do you suppose makes this tea
and the smoked fish, then room
for the grandchildren you almost forgot

were born later -- the dead
are no better at it than you
--they mix up dates and places

though what pins them down
is no longer the flowers
soothed by each other and vague streams

--no, it wasn't you lifting this cup
passing itself off as empty
with nothing inside to unwrap

--from the start the dead form a circle
as if they still expect to sing outloud
and you would hear it, open your mouth.

Simon Perchik is an attorney whose poems have appeared in *Partisan Review*, *The New Yorker*, and elsewhere. *Rafts* (Parsifal Editions) is his most recent collection. For more information, including his essay "Magic, Illusion and Other Realities" and a complete bibliography, please visit his website at www.geocities.com/simonthepoet.

Robin's Eggs

Philip Waterhouse

The endless list, girls as first-born offspring
given masculine-derivative names by fathers
pining for sons--
Theodora, Alexis, Phillipa, or,
Carla, Georgiana, Michele, all genuinely of
hips, bosoms, labia, who spend youth trying to
make it up to daddies by becoming Tom-boys.

Robin, now, came straightforward to tell her
male parent she was stepping out as a Sappho
without asking for latitude from
the conventional world, including him
who hung on to hope,
method of insemination immaterial,
that daughter Robin like others in her
state of choice still experienced the ancient urge
and might yet give
him a grandson or ...

you never knew,
another gutsy girl.

Philip A Waterhouse was born/grew up small East Coast town weathered lots of snow, drove clunker West using construction projects go-fer jobs and getting involved as newshound, press-and-radio, all to put bread in the belly basket, to the present small town, no snow ...

Two Poems by Shawn Aveningo

GENERATIONS

My belly swollen with sugar and spice,
Embryonic fingertips poked and prodded as
my little boy tugged on my apron strings,
so to speak,
really just another oversized tent dress.
Graduating that day
from Gerber rice mixed with breast milk
to his first bowl of Cream of Wheat.

Stirring the slushy contents of the saucepan,
I remembered Nanny serving breakfast
for Popo and me. The kitchen,
with its red Formica countertops,
of their 50's style bungalow
in a small Midwestern,
Mayberry-like town.
Popo and I both had our favorite recipes.
I liked mine thick
with butter
and lots of sugar and cinnamon.
He liked his runny as soup,
making a little girl giggle,
his slurps
soaking his grey whickers.

I wished Popo was there with me
in my Georgian kitchen,
to share a bowl
with my little boy.
I believe he watched instead
from a nearby cloud.

Seventeen short years later,
I still reach for a bowl
of Cream of Wheat whenever
the weight of the world
seems too heavy.

Last summer,
Dad got the diagnosis.
Cancer
Again.
After a 30 year hiatus from the
deadly wretched disease.
Losing his second kidney
left him a new life with
dialysis his constant companion.

He has given up
cool glasses of sweet tea in the summertime,
midnight runs to Ted Drewes for frozen custard,
and the taste of a cold Bud at a Cardinal's game.
He's forbidden to enjoy
peanut butter,
pizza,
chocolate,
Fritos
and even bananas.

The nurse handed me the list
of Acceptable Foods
My fingers scan the short list and land on
Cream of Wheat.
My old friend, Cream of Wheat,
who I promptly introduce to my dad.
He likes it with cinnamon too.

CAPITALISM

Dow crashed today,
Mr. Jones simply
exhausted.
Yuppies in pinstripe,
like bulls in a china shop,
ran to the bank
fearing their greenbacks
placed on back order.
Mothers ran to the market,
fearing dried glands
and empty cupboards
won't sustain their children,
as the price of milk soars.
Toddlers ran in the grass.
Aahhh.
Ignorance truly is bliss
for the young.
Philosophers ran to the shelves,
hoarding their lexicons
until the words were sold out,
preparing for us a new paradigm.
Politicians hid in the men's room
planning future rendezvous'
left only to expose themselves
behind a sealed podium.
Soldiers continued the fight,
bearing our burdens,
pausing their own pursuits,
for our plight.
And the poets.
Ah, sweet poets.
They ran to Luna's, where Art
was still free at an open mic.
Priceless.

More Poems from SPC's High School Poetry Contest

MY OTHER HALF

Sara Cuevas

Your eyes glisten in the dark,
 They speak to me, they do.
 They say, "What really hides behind the veil?
 That waterfall, that cascade of hair,
 Who is the person that lies beneath?"
 I see tears, I see want, I see many things,
 But most, above all, is the need,
 The need to know me, the need to see my scars.
 I'm touched, I really am.
 No one has cared like you,
 No one loves me like you,
 Not as much as you,
 To the point that you want to take away my wounds,
 And take them unto your own body, your own memory.
 It makes me smile, though a bitter one it is.
 How can one so great, so perfect as you,
 Love a scarred being such as this?
 You wipe away the tears,
 The ones I had not known I'd shed.
 You pull me close and I sigh my relief.
 It seems too good to be real, like you would walk away,
 As if it were all a simple joke, a lighthearted jest.
 But I see now.
 You'll never leave me,
 For you are me,
 And I am you.
 One half completes the other,
 Together becoming whole.

QUINTET

Seth Katz

The strings of the bass are veins.
 For the player, life is nothing without music.
 It's not just something you hear.
 You feel it.
 You could see it in his eyes
 If he took off his sunglasses.
 The drummer, sitting behind them all,
 Is more in it than anyone.
 Quietly tapping triplets on the hi-hat.
 Hours later, he'll still be hearing them
 In his head, walking in rhythm around
 The house, patting walls, the dinner table,
 His leg. The drums are the only instrument
 You can play no matter where you are.
 The piano speaks assertively, but allows room
 To be completed by the guitar.
 Together they create a harmony
 So beautiful it makes you want to give up smoking.
 Combined with the other two,
 They form an idiom that speaks
 Todas las lenguas y nunca muere.
 If you gotta ask, you'll nevu know.
 Then the horn player enters. A real hep cat.
 The trumpet with the silver hammers of life.
 He floats above the crowd on a wave of A flat.
 He adds a gorgeous dissonance to the arrangement.

OUT THERE

Missy Talbot

Out there there is a child on a street corner who has just run away.
 Out there there is a student knowing there are still bills to be paid.
 Out there there is a man sitting by an empty grave.
 Out there there is a firefighter wondering how many people he didn't save.
 Out there there is a dog barking at a passerby.
 Out there there is a sister who doesn't want to say goodbye.
 Out there there is a man laughing too hard to breathe.
 Out there there is a couple with an engagement box up his sleeve.
 Out there there is a father smashing a bottle of wine.
 Out there there is a soldier telling the others to stay in line.
 Out there there is something different, in our hearts there is something more.
 Our lives are going by just as we open the front door.

UNTITLED

Natalie Villalon

1.

and autumn soars past before you can catch it
hold it, make it worth the dead and the dying
it's colorful but not frivolous
you know?
Its a sign, a symptom, a warning
that we quietly rake away
Give them your vial of tears
your black mourning clothes
They'll build a fire
Because the autumn wind chills
conjures ghosts whisper too many truths
tear down the walls that kept back the floods
they don't understand you need a bite to savor a kiss

2.

Photographed young
blind prophet, miserable oracle
whispers for the future
bloody penny madness for play
played for thrills,
paid off in pills
taken in secret dark sacred places
elderly saplings cured for reality
swallowing to escape
for a moment, to phantoms
voided timeless
in scrapbooks and albums
shock valued at auction
for a tear, a pin prick
empty hope

3.

I find it comforting to be confused
within nonsense like a deep warm darkness
what a privilege to be insane
to know only space ships and canaries and love
only a fantasy, a private conspiracy
created where the winter can't find you
eternal summer, tinted white
chimera and hydra, my conscience
Naomi Neal

Voyage

A boat found me,
followed me home like a hungry dog
followed me far from home, like memory

and I found my sea legs,
and they were stronger than my
land legs.

The boat was

busted fenders
and t-shirts
and forgiveness
and sleep,

it kissed the water sideways like cinema
and swam.

And it was me and the boat and my sea legs
and my white sky and my ocean, clean.

In the North we passed an island
where the last bears lived
in houses of honeycomb bricks.

In the South

a boy with a cowlick swam out from shore
to bring me a Coke.



In the East I bought knick-knacks,


In the West I was scorned.

We shored up in the center of the compass
where the arrow ate itself, feet first
on a rock painted in a bird shit palette,
my boat and I.

It grinned goodbye with bear teeth
and dissolved into the sea, litter and
cotton balls spotted with blood.

My sea legs and I strolled snowy beaches
and ruined woodlands
and corporate deserts
each other's and our own.

www.sacramentopoetrycenter.org	June 2008
	sacramento's literary calendar & review
poetrynow	
A PUBLICATION OF THE SACRAMENTO POETRY CENTER	
<div data-bbox="581 226 1286 940">  </div> <div data-bbox="1365 163 1523 1035"> <p>Appearing June 2, 2008 for the Poetry Center at Time Tested Books -- Theresa McCourt reads. Performances by contemporary violinist Sasha Tkacheff and C-Sus Vocal Jazz A Capella Group with Bob Stanley. 1114 21st St.</p> </div>	

<p>poetrynow</p> <p>The Poet Tree, Inc. 1719 25th Street Sacramento, CA 95816</p>	<p>spc blog: www.sacramentopoetrycenter.blogspot.com</p> <p>Every Tuesday: SPC POETRY WORKSHOP 7:30 PM, Hart Senior Center, 27th & J ● Bring 15-20 copies of your one-page poem</p>
<p>SPC Readings ● Mondays, 7:30PM</p> <p><u>JUNE 2ND</u> THERESA MCCOURT & BOB STANLEY</p> <p><u>JUNE 9TH</u> FD REEVE & AL GARCIA</p> <p><u>JUNE 16TH</u> SUSAN KELLY-DEWITT</p> <p><u>JUNE 23RD</u> JAMES LEE JOBE</p> <p><u>JUNE 30TH</u> STEPHEN KESSLER & JEFF KNORR</p>	
	<p>The Poet Tree, Inc., also known as The Sacramento Poetry Center, is a non-profit corporation</p>