

poetrynow

August 2008

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

The Sacramento Poetry Center Presents

The Cathy Washington Prize

First Annual Poetry Book Contest

Winning book manuscript will be published by The Sacramento Poetry Center Press. Winner will also receive a prize of \$1000.00 and 50 free copies of their winning book.

GUIDELINES: Submit a manuscript of 48-70 numbered pages of original poetry in any style. Manuscript must contain 2 title pages: Name and contact information (including email address, if possible) should appear on first title page only. Name should not appear anywhere else. Manuscript should be typed, single-spaced, paginated, and bound with a clip.

The Sacramento Poetry Center will also consider publishing additional manuscripts from the contest. Check for \$20.00 US per entry (multiple entries OK) should be made out to The Sacramento Poetry Center. Paid-up members of the Sacramento Poetry Center may enter the contest for a reduced fee of \$15. Please note that members of SPC will not receive preferential treatment in the judging process. Include a table of contents page and an acknowledgments page for magazine or anthology publications. Will read entries postmarked between **January 1**, **2009 and March 31, 2009.** Enclose an SASE for announcement of the winner.

Entries should be mailed to:

The Sacramento Poetry Center

Poetry Book Contest

P.O. Box 160406, Sacramento, CA 95816

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Poetry Now is always in need of volunteers – if you can give an hour of your time one month (or more) to write an article, help with a mailing (or delivery) or do layout/design work, please contact Frank Graham at 916.606.4303, or grahampoet@aol.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. or our blog at sacramentopoetrycenter.blogspot.com

Please submit your poems to SPC, in text of email to PoetDawn2008@aol.com with a brief bio. If you're unable to use a computer, you may snail them to 1719 25th Street, Sacramento, CA 95816.

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.

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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)

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president's message

Now that I'm not hosting readings so often, I don't get to all the Monday night readings at SPC. But I was lucky to catch the July evening where **Frances Kakugawa** and **Go** each had a chance to share their fine work. Sometimes the chemistry (of poetry) is amazing. Frances wove a story through poems and anecdotes, creating an inspiring tapestry of her personal odyssey as a writer. Go, her cofeature, read a few of his pieces, but also acted as host, running the open mic, "sharing the love" with the crowd. It was a good place to be. By the way, Go hosts a Tuesday night Slam event at Sac City Pizza (Sutterville at 21st) from 7 to 10pm. It's a good new place to hit the open mic – you might even win a prize!

We're starting to plan events for 2009, which will be SPC's 30th year serving the Sacramento community. Any suggestions, ideas, thoughts, poems – anything that comes to mind, let me know. We want to celebrate the poetry of the Sacramento region – the poets, past and present, that have made this area alive with verse. We also want to get the word out – to expand our reach, so that others can benefit from the various projects that SPC puts on. Thanks to so many of you who have contributed over the last – gasp – three decades. To update the Poetry Center faithful, **Luke Breit**, who helped run SPC for a huge part of these 29 years, is recovering from a minor stroke. Patrick Grizzell reports that Luke's happy to be home again, and should be back in the swing of things before long.

A full serving of Monday nights awaits the poetry fan at SPC this August. Mary Mackey and Brad Henderson will read on the 4th, and then Wendy Carlisle will read with another Brad - Brad Buchanan - on the 11th. Brad has recently published a new book, Swimming the Mirror. On a special Thursday night reading – August 14 – Rebecca Morrison hosts a quartet of writers - Dan Guerra, Alex Stephens, Mary Rosenberry and Paul Roundtree. On Monday the 18th, we feature Nancy Wallace & Melen Lunn, and on the 25th it will be Ann Keniston and June Saraceno. Come down and check out the chemistry – I mean poetry –is it an art or a science? That's for the listener to decide.

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home, all year long.	cramento Poetry Center you get Poetry Now delivered to your I membership fee to SPC, 1719 25th Street, Sacramento, CA !
NAME	ADDRESS
Email:	Phone:

Dah Ctanlar

Brigit Truex was born in Washington DC. She has three collection of poems: Of A Feather, Leaf by Leaf and most recently, A Counterpane Without (Rattlesnake, 2007). Her work has appeared in Atlanta Review, Tiger's Eye, Manzanita and various anthologies including Sacramento: 100 Poems, Nantucket and Little Town USA. She is a member of Red Fox Poets Underground and Celtic Women.

Bronze Age

The land takes on a new dimension as darkness seeps back into the ground, ink on vellum in the chill rounded towers

of stone and fading shadows. With light-fall, the treetops are first to be defined, their leaves

shimmering – a meadow of moon-slick grasses, dawn-fire on a high mountain lake.

A rising line of geese carve a line of ogham-script on the ancient ivory sky. One by one, the bearded oaks appear, their thick

round boles carved from bronze. Random chips flake off, fall earthward as leaves murmur and drift in currents of air and time.

Illuminata

She is seated beside the studio windows with the moted morning light of palest yellow that daubs highlights on her rounded surfaces.

The model leans forward, forehead touching knee, hair a wavered curtain that hides her face. Her body, a three-quarter circle, leg outstretched on the paisley rug.

She forms an illuminated Q from some ancient text, hand-lettered with great care, her back tattooed with tiny stipples, the delicate shadows from the quaking aspen outside that

trembles at such momentary beauty.

Thyme Leaves

Sally Wood

She edges her walker near the kitchen window overlooking the water. Her old eyes frown on the pan **John Grey** is an Australian born poet, US resident since the late seventies. He works as a Financial Systems Analyst. John was recently published in Slant, Briar Cliff Review and Albatross with work upcoming in Poetry East, Cape Rock and REAL.

Child Rising

The child crawls out of sleep into the woman's arms, hauls itself up over denim knees, into the hollow of rib and soothing, each movement, a mimicry, each word, a ripening. The steepness is leveled by the pleasure of miniature blood, of curious eyes, the distance, the pain, shrunk into birth scars that shine like stars on comfortable skin. Nothing more solid than rosewood and motherhood, than the geometry of four legs, pink mouth and milky breasts, the gallery of flesh on flesh, and bone pressing deep into the bone that made it.

Jack Lindeman has published four books: Twenty-One Poems (Atlantis Editions); As If (Finishing Line Press--which was nominated for a Pushcart Prize); The Conflict of Convictions (The Chilton Book Co.--a book on the Civil War); Appleseed Hollow (1st Books Library--a book about living on a farm).

Laura

Yes, you were the one who smiled from such a dizzying height, the dimpled cheeks tenderly steepled by your long bones and torn jeans entirely symbolic of some vague philosophy which seemed to men nothing more than your own sweet nature embracing every adversity you meet. And yet I'm sorry vou sneezed with your nose running almost to pink in my house of dusty books because I wanted your comfort perfect, your El Greco torso completely at ease and the spaces showing your bare knees a kind of definition

Lisa Jones interviews Camille Norton

Camille Norton's first book of poems, Corruption, was selected by Campbell McGrath as the winner of the 2004 National Poetry Series Open Competition. She has previously published poetry, fiction, and literary criticism and co-edited Resurgent: New Writings by Women (a collection of Experimental Writings by Women). Many of the poems in Corruption are ekphrastic (inspired by other art forms), some are very autobiographical, others focus on the historical time of the art she responds to. The poems are intellectual, yet sensual and fairly accessible. She says she decided early on that she wanted to be understood.

A graduate of Harvard, Norton currently teaches poetry as a full professor of English at the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California. I had the pleasure of studying with her a year ago, so I invited her to my home for an interview.

The following are excerpts from the longer interview available at: poetrynow.blogspot.com

The book has three sections. The first one is the title, Corruption, and the last one is "Songs against Ending." In my mind these two topics seem to run through the whole book. I have heard you talk about the "Songs Against Ending" concept. I think you say we are trying to hold something in our hands, how do you put it?

I was just talking about this with an independent study student. We were reading a fabulous poem by Larry Levis, "Those Graves in Rome." He tells the story of visiting Keat's grave, about being young, going to Rome with a couple of friends and you know Keats doesn't have his name on the grave. [The poem quotes the words Keats wrote for his tombstone "here lies one whose name is writ in water"].

He says in the poem that most everything we have disappears, and that's really the truth. Inside the poem he talks about seeing a fingerprint on a bannister in Rome, made by a child . . . how this child could have died of malaria due to tremendous poverty. The mark is this fingerprint and he ends with a phrase like "names are both empty and full" and perhaps that's "almost enough."

... Poetry is essentially just passed on person to person. Kind of like Buddhism--"from warm hand to warm hand" as they say. The rest of it--[there's] so much we can't hold onto.

I think that whole idea of corruption . . . this is a book I wrote after my father's death. I had gone through all this stuff in my life. I had gone through a big break-up in a long relationship and I now see it as a working through of this passage--this is a mid-life book. I was really coping with "yes, I know about death and there's just so much that is beautiful to look at here" and that is the challenge.

Interview continued on page 8...

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A Elegy For Harry Truman

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How far is it to that place?
Must you roll like a stone to arrive
or simply hide your face in your pillow
never to be discomforted again?
Being forever in a changeless landscape
is something you could never claim before.
Those who knew you remember everything
while you cannot recall
the most newsworthy gesture
of your important life.

2.

If one must argue over your merits luckily you are out of earshot.

Anger runs wild only in the veins of the living. But there on some island we have not mapped yet you have become inaccessible except to the natives who also cannot measure the length of their own bones or even see themselves without eyes in the mirror of the sky.

Sacramento Area Literary Calendar August 2008

Sat., 8/2 and every 1st Sat- Rhythm N Rhymes: open mike, webcast & filmed for public TV @ Butch N Nellie's, near corner of 19th & I

Mon, 8/4, 7:30 p.m. Mary Mackey and Brad Henderson, SPC HQ at 1719 25th st.

Tues, 8/5, 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. – "Go's Open Mic" at Sac City Pizza, Sutterville at 21st across from Sac City College http://www.myspace.com/lifesentenceshow

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

Wed, 8/7; eves, The Bistro, 3rd and F Streets in Davis, *1st and 3rd Wednesdays*. Free. 530.756.4556 aojones@ucdavis.edu for info -- or schedule @ http://www.bistro33.com/bistro33_davis

Thurs, 8/8 and every Thurs 8pm, Open Mike and featured poet at Lunas Café -- Feature TBA

Mon, 8/11, 7:30 p.m. Brad Buchanan reads followed by open mic. The SPC at 1719 25th street

Tues, 8/12, 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.

Friday, 8/15, Galleria Posada Featured Poet - Felicia Martinez. 1024 22nd St.Sac, www.larazagalleriaposada.org Mon, 8/18, 7:30 pm. Nancy Wallace will be reading followed by an open mic. The SPC at 1719 25th street

Tues, 8/19, 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. 8/20, 8pm, Mahogany Poetry Series, Queen Sheeba Restaurant, 1704 Broadway.

Thurs, 8/8 *and every Thurs* 8pm, Open Mike and featured poet at Lunas Café -- Feature TBA

Sunday, 8/24, 11-1pm, meeting of El Camino Poets bring 8 copies of your poems for critique. Hosted by Carol Louise Moon at the Hart Senior Center, 27th and J streets in Sac.

Monday 8/25, 7:30 p.m. Ann Keniston and June Saraceno read at SPC HO 1719 25th St.

Tues, 8/26, 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.

Thursday, 8/28 8p.m. open mic and featured poets Ted Finn, and Gene Bloom at Luna's Cafe 1414 16th Street Sac.

COMING SOON: Comedy in Poetry, Sept 1, 2008 at SPC HQ, with Carol Moon, Michael Rowe, Tim Kahl, Brad Buchanan and other very funny poets!

Alan Williamson and Adrena Zawinski – at SPC HQ, September 29, 2008

Mundial Experimental Tim Kahl

Dream Vision

Materials and Methods: The dream vision was a popular form that persisted from the 12th through the early 16th century and existed primarily in two forms. One form was the vision of romantic love (the primary example being Le Roman de la Rose, a medieval French poem written roughly about 1230) and the other was a more religion-tinged vision in the tradition of the biblical visions of St. Paul and St. John or from the philosophical tradition of Cicero.

The form relies on a retrospective look at a dream by the speaker of the poem, usually the poet himself (as women were usually not allowed to dream in those days). The dreamer/speaker often traverses a highly symbolic environment under the tutelage of a master who imparts some revelation or insight that can be passed on once the dreamer/speaker is outside the dream.

The dreamer/speaker of the dream vision is often troubled by some inherent lack that he/she possesses, sometimes an inferiority of character or will, lack of social standing, or inability to comprehend. The essential tension of the dream vision is to mesh the naive dreamer with in the dream to the wiser speaker who has emerged from the dream and is reflecting on it from the position of the wisdom gained. Therefore, the dream vision must balance the past and present, involvement and distance. It is a marriage of these contradictory elements, a marriage which, like all marriages, has its rocky passages to overcome.

In this way the dream vision can be a vehicle to pursue the contradictions of the age that one lives in. For those in the medieval age, this occurred in a philosophical context with respect to naturalism versus theism. The question was whether one should study the laws and relationships of the natural world for their own sake or whether one should do so for the sake of God.

The dream vision can also mark a change in behavior of the speaker after he/she has emerged from the dream, and in this way it can comment on certain prevalent social institutions (think of how Scrooge's awakening in A Christmas Carol is a commentary on the growing mercantilism of industrial revolution-era England).

Projects In the Field: Transporting the dream vision to contemporary times is not difficult to do. Social contradictions still abound. It is not hard in the middle of another long political cycle amid this campaign season to pit the naive dreamer of a perfectly cooperative state apparatus, one where political goals and solutions are clearly defined, against the haphazard mess that arises out of interest-driven politics. Who might emerge as an authoritative figure to lead a dreamer/speaker through such a tangled thicket? A chastened Jack Abramoff, who, recently released from prison at some fictional point in the future, realizes how his voracious Machiavellian appetite served the interests of his benefactors and very few others?

Perhaps one might want to take on larger, more culturally-inscribed territory, such as the culture of expediency in the U.S.; that is, the cultural imperative that tells us to plan on taking the easy way. How does this balance with the notion of giving things up, asceticism, and what master of wants and needs would serve as a guiding light? A perfect consumer like Julia Child? the ever-resourceful Martha Stewart? Or someone like my grandmother from the old country whose penchant for saving balls of twine and stacking the styrofoam slabs that gird meat bought at the supermarket to use in some future project?

What would such a speaker feel compelled to do after his/her dream? Stay at home and make soup? Join a group of amateur abstainers.

Camille Norton, Interview by Lisa Jones: continued

Norton Interview: cont. from page 4

You have a number of poems that are ekphrastic Can you tell me more about how you discovered "I am going to do a bunch of poems from this method."

Oh, it was total serendipity. I was on my sabbatical and I was invited to give some lectures in Florence, Italy on Western poetry. It was my first time in Italy and I was spellbound. . . . I found that it was a moment in my life that I had started to really clear the way for these poems. I was living in a loft and commuting and the art allowed me to think through certain problems

I think the art really worked for me because I couldn't write like--a Sharon Olds kind of poem. I just couldn't. It was just too scary. I ended up writing --there's material in there that's often quasi-autobiographical, but also the voice is often very inflated or a persona. It is not this strictly confessional kind of poetry, but there is something in there that is true. That is more obvious in some poems than others.

...

I have heard you talk about wanting to get away from ego.

I don't know if you can get away from ego, but I am interested in the way that language can create a different space for ego. . . . This is really hard to talk about and maybe it is very vain of me to say this, but for me, I want to be in communication with other people who have written. That's what really matters—to be inside this river of poems, going through this gate that happens. The way in almost seems like incantation. You go through the river and you have this experience and it is very deep.

It is like going into dream. So when you are in dream, it would be incorrect to say your just inhabiting your ego. Of course you are inhabiting your ego, but you are also washing around in all of the stuff that this culture produces and what it means to be human. Human--knowing that you are born, you are young, you are aging, and you are going to pass away. What stays behind is this river of the things we love and, for me, it is language.

.....

ROOM TO **WRITE** August and September Schedule

Sacramento's new school of creative writing, **ROOM TO WRITE** is based at the home of the Sacramento Poetry Center at 25th and R Streets. If you want to give yourself time to write, or work on pieces in progress, the classes offered at **Room to Write** will give you the incentive to work, and a community of writers to work with.

POETRY WRITING WORKSHOP - moves to Thursdays 7:00 to 8:30 pm

led by Bob Stanley

This class offers in-class writing exercises, group work, and individual feedback. This weekly group provides a supportive forum for beginning poets as well as more advanced writers. Six week session begins August 21.

POETRY SEMINAR: THE GENERATION OF '27: American Poets Born in the Late '20s

Wednesday Nights 7 to 9:00 pm led by John Allen Cann

An in-depth look at six Major American Poets born between 1926 and 1929.

August 20 – W.S. Merwin Aug 27 – Robert Bly Sept 10 – Adrienne Rich Sept 17 – Frank O'Hara Sept 24 – Galway Kinnell Oct 1 – Philip Levine

Cost for a full session of six classes is \$180, and drop-ins are welcome at \$30 per session. To register, or for more information on **ROOM TO WRITE**, call Bob Stanley at 916-240-1897, or email Bob at bobstanley@sbcglobal.net.

Sigauke reviews ...

String Theory by Alice L. Teeter

A book review by Emmanuel Sigauke

Winner of the 2008 Charles B. Dickson Memorial Chapbook Award. Georgia Poetry Society (2008).

Drawn by the title, I looked for the poems about strings first, and I found two. The title poem is about our interconnectedness, our existence as part of the universal continuum, the network of galaxies that individuate yet connect us, this life with its amazing and dazzling hereness. The poem addresses each one of us to contribute a line of verse, to celebrate what there is of life because when we were born, "the universe began", and when we die, "time will end." We are unique, yet in our uniqueness we are connected by strings (perhaps the essence of our humanity) in these "fields of play."

In "Heart String Theory" our hearts register and "vibrate" to the sounds of voices. The poem speaks to our ability to feel, and feeling is a response to the tug from the outside world. What gets tugged is the essential string that connects or branches us. This explains why the physicists in "Everlasting Chocolate Cake Haiku" share a cake, where "each takes one half with each bite" and the "cake lasts forever." In "The woman Who Ate Anger", we are told, in allegorical and fairy-tale fashion, of a woman who consumes the worries of this world until she grows too fat to be functional. Then one day she decides to stop eating this anger, exposes the ugliness of it all to the world that watches until it loses interest and she gains her ultimate independence: no more worrying, no more eating anger, no more growing fat.

We are treated to two more "heart" pieces. The speaker of "Sacred Heart" addresses the reader directly, warning against confusing surface purities with the dangers underneath: "Do not try to walk here" because if you do "you will find that it is white hot." So maybe in our string theory, we must throw or receive the string with caution. In "Pagoda Heart" Teeter uses powerful imagery as she compares a heart to an oriental temple. The speaker's clattered heart needs to be cleaned until it's like this temple. If having a big heart means dealing with clatter, the persona would rather have a one-roomed heart like a pagoda.

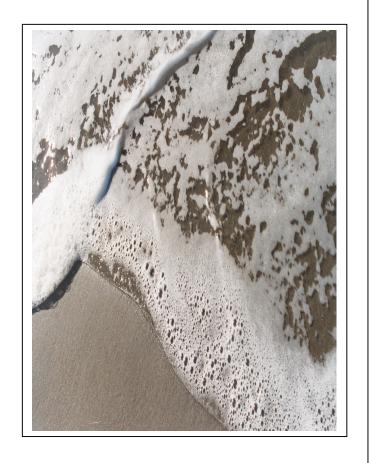
Alice Teeter's collection entertains as it teaches. In it there is singing, there is dancing to freedom, dancing to the bondage of the self. Our experiences are part of the numerous fields of play that represent the universes we occupy. We are each our own universe, existing in a vast galaxy. The serious message in the poems is presented through fresh imagery and playful lines. After all, the twang of strings produces music, and music is play. This is a fantastic debut collection.

Visit with book reviewer, poet, professor and event host Emmanuel Sigauke at every first Monday of the month poetry readings at SPC HQ!

August 2008 sacramento's literary calendar & review

www.sacramentopoetrycenter.org

poetrynow



A PUBLICATION OF THE SACRAMENTO POETRY CENTER

Mon, 8.4.08; 7:30pm @ SPC HQ, 1719 25th in SAC, Mary Mackey and -and on Sept. 30, UC Davis Professor Alan Brad Henderson. Coming Moon and Michael Rowe-Williamson.

poetry now The Poet Tree, Inc. 1719 25th Street

Sacramento, CA 95816

SPC Readings ● Mondays @ 7:30PM

AUGUST 4TH

MARY MACKEY & **BRAD HENDERSON**

AUGUST 11TH BRAD BUCHANAN

AUGUST 18TH NANCY WALLACE

AUGUST 25TH ANN KENISTON & JUNE SARACENO

spc blog: sacramentopoetrycenter.blogspot.com

Every Tuesday: SPC POETRY WORKSHOP 7:30 PM, Hart Senior Center, 27th & J Bring 15 copies of your one-page poem

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