

poetrynow |

sacramento's literary
calendar & review



SPC READINGS
MONDAYS, 7:30PM

EVERY TUESDAY:
SPC Poetry Workshop
7:30 PM, Hart Senior
Center, 27th & J Bring
15-20 copies of your
one-page poem

spc blog: www.sacramentopoetrycenter.blogspot.com

poetrynow

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

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

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Book Reviews: Emmanuel Siguake

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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)

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www.sacramentopoetrycenter.org.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We've been reading Annie Dillard's short essay "Living Like Weasels" in my English 1A classes at Sac State this semester. Dillard describes an encounter with a wild weasel (is there any other kind?). It's a tale of epiphany, really; she goes on to insist that we should live for what matters in life with a weasel's primal intensity. She says "I think it would be well, and proper, and obedient, and pure, to grasp your one necessity and not let it go, to dangle from it limp wherever it takes you." A lot of the students like the essay; they have their dreams and wonder how they can fit them into already busy lives. Others are still trying to figure out what, if anything, matters to them, or aren't interested in dangling limp in a weasel-inspired reverie. But they talk and argue about Dillard's ideas, and the "necessities" that sometimes present themselves in a life.

I'm always amazed at how many people find that writing poems is one of their necessities – it's something that seems to hold us and not let go, and we go where it takes us. Listening to poets read their work, I can tell it's something that makes them complete. Now that I think about it, Dillard is talking about writing – sharing thoughts with others – when she tells us to "seize it and let it seize you." When we listen, read or write poems, we're giving ourselves to the form, letting it take us where it will. At a workshop I attended in New York, Billy Collins told us that poets should think about "where the poem is taking me." And he quoted Emerson who said that "Poetry is ice skating. You can't be in control all the time." So maybe that's one reason people need to write, because we let go when we do. I don't usually use a lot of quotes, but that's what we're working on in English 1A. We're trying to quote Dillard, Sedaris, and Alice Walker, use their language within ours, and stay in control of language to say what it is we need to say. And if we're lucky, maybe in the long run, our language will run away with us.

DREAM PAINT

By David Iribarne

diribane@netzero.net

"Can I paint my dreams on my wall?"

You said to me, chuckling.

Not knowing if you were serious,
I said "Yes, you can paint your dreams."

I didn't want to deny you your dreams.
Wondered what color your paint would be?

Was I anywhere in your dreams?
I looked at you as you smiled, four teeth missing.
How much time flies.
Seemed only yesterday, you were crying
tossed and turned nights.
Now, you are wanting to paint your dreams.

What are your dreams?
Is any wall big enough to hold your dreams?
Make sure you use vibrant colors
so you don't lose sight of them.
Don't let the colors fade as time goes on
keep believing, keep desiring.

Darkness cannot ever hold reign over your dreams
always be strong when night takes over.
Water will come and harsh storms
will make your paint run
always know that you don't have to stop.
Storms will be over and you can begin painting again.

Some days colors will be dim
You will have to touch them up later.
Know that I will be there to help you.

Always gather paint along the way
so you have a good abundance
to fill the wall.

Be open to advice, but be true
allowing your wall to truly shine.

You said that night—"Can I paint my dreams?"
Staring at that blank canvas, I saw no more empty space.

Marie Reynolds was born in San Francisco. She lives in Sacramento and works as a registered nurse.

WHERE MY LUNCH COMES FROM

By Mary Reynolds

marielizabeth@hotmail.com

The man who works the tray line
in the hospital cafeteria wears a fine mesh
hair net over his ruddy scalp.
His hands are round as dinner rolls.

He holds a stainless slotted spoon,
coaxes into slippery mounds,
buttered baby lima beans. Mist rises
from the steam table. He ladles

onto my Styrofoam plate a generous
measure of honey-glazed carrots,
spring onions, lightly braised.
On his face is a look of such tenderness

and fatherly pride, it's easy to imagine
he grew these vegetables himself.
Perhaps he dug them up in the April dusk,
shook clumps of dirt from damp roots,

rinsed them in the faucet's clear stream,
while he gazed out the kitchen window,
watching the neighbors' children at play,
listening to the ping of aluminum bat,

recalling the smell of new grass,
wet soil, the way night felt
when he was still a boy in sneakers
chasing a quick white ball.

TWO POEMS BY MATT VEAZEY

Matt Veazey studied creative writing at the University of Arizona in the 1980s, and his poems are influenced by his love of Western landscapes. He now lives in Sacramento and has recently participated in the Second Friday Poetry Reading. His work has been showcased in Convergence: an online journal of poetry & art.

SMALL CAGES

By Matt Veazey

In your old white cotton night gown
With your breasts spilling out
You sat in the window bench
On the west side of your big house
Surrounded by orange raw silk cushions
Chain smoking Kool Filter Kings
In the direct rays of the winter sun
Smoke swirling about you in the yellow light
Your ashtray overflowing
Arms crossed tightly around your abdomen
Legs wound together like old vines
Doubled over as if in the grippe
Gazing occasionally upon the canary
Next to you in a cage too small
A gift from your third husband
That bird never sang

OK...I STOLE

By Matt Veazey

It's just that I was desperate
You had only been gone a short while
It was too quiet in your home
I went through the clothes in your closet
Ran my fingers across them like piano keys
I found your smell there
In your pink kimono with Kleenex in each pocket
The same one you've had since I was a child
So I kept on looking
For something tangible
I could hold onto
A complete and thorough search
It took hours
I had your place to myself
I took the three Zuni bracelets you wore every day
The ebony rosary your mother gave you
And your pink tourmaline Sacred Heart class ring
I put everything (but those items) back
Exactly as I had found them
When I had finished
Your smell was gone
Now I think perhaps
I chased you away

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WHAT IS LEFT

By Suzanne Roberts

The black wool blazer, now between dresses
in my closet, once hung alone
in a Greenwich Village studio apartment—
The happiest time, Daddy said, of his life.
He only knew this later, as one could, after
having reached the end.

He wears the coat in the black and white
photograph, now on the table next to the one
of Mother winning a beauty pageant.
He leans over a bridge in Central Park, holds
a cigarette between two fingers. The other palm
flat on the stone bridge. I cannot imagine
who holds the camera. Below the bridge,
indolent fish follow the creek's current—eyes
perpetually open, dreaming a watery motion.

AT THE STARBUCK'S

South Lake Tahoe, California

By Suzanne Roberts

A husband pushes his wife away,
brushes her hand from his arm
as if flicking away an annoying
but harmless insect. Bessie Smith
sings "Nobody in town can bake
a sweet jelly roll like mine," and maybe
nobody notices but me, and maybe
the husband loves the wife passionately,
and I am making this up because
I have been this wife. But now the wife
tries again to hold the husband's hand.
Her diamond ring sparkles a thousand streaks
of white light in the dimly lit café. The husband
pushes both hands into the front pockets
of his shorts. The counter girl shouts
Moca Frap, extra whip. The wife
takes her drink with both hands, sucks
frozen sweetness from the straw.

TWO POEMS BY DIANNA HENNING

Dianna Henning has recently been published in or has work forthcoming in Red Rock Review, Psychological Perspectives, Seattle Review, Poetry International, Ginosko, South Dakota Review, Blue Fifth Review, and Hawai'i Pacific Review's "Best of the Decade 1992-2007. She has been facilitating a creative writing workshop from her home, The Thompson Peak Writers' Workshop, for fourteen years. www.thompsonpeakretreat.com

TO CANOE THE POSSIBLE FACE THE DIRECTION OF TRAVEL

By Dianna Henning

It takes one moon to make a canoe,
the Chestnut tree's innards coated with rosin and torched—

cooled, the heart of the tree is scraped with shells,
until all coal is cleared;

the inside trunk caulked with spruce gum,
bark-skin affixed for the outer shell.

To know how to make a thing
is to love it—the quiet turned in the paddle of the hand,
form following dream.

Imagine lovers with their canoe bodies
skidding over the soft lake of sheets,

skin burning against skin,
all blurring of identity,

as they glide the surface of each other,
high stern meeting high stern.
with my Dog Tags, but I'll get cut or tetanus and damage
"Government Property."

FOR THE GOD OF ALL BONES

By Dianna Henning

Salivating in the alleyway,
your dog eyes the neighbor's Persian cat,
a movie in Rover's head,
the sport of a good romp—
so he launches, breaks his doughnut form
into an éclair as he often does,
streamlines towards the feline,
her hiss the hiss of all disturbances
that jack-open your early dawn
just when you wanted to snag another
good-morning java, but hearing the fracas
you instead leap for the door,
bulwark it open and lurch out onto
the street where pooch
skewers the cat's hind quarters,
bad dog, bad dog you yell
prepared to wrench open the canine's jaws,
free the puss who preens
in the golden lap of a lifetime of retirement,
and it's in that moment of contemplation
versus action that your fettered
thought breaks its leash,
and you recall yourself a boy
chasing after your model helicopter
as it spun towards tree branches
that would further screw its already
skewed mechanics of tiny gears—
the manual that came with the chopper
not precise enough to mend
the fragile back in place—and right there
with your frantic hand-held gears
in the trip-box of changing course,
sunshine split through branches
and instead of one tree you saw three,
light eking a puddle around you,
your breath backed up because you
never realized how going after one thing
brought about something entirely different.

Patricia Hickerson, born in New York, danced in Warner Bros. "kiddie" shorts. She is a former Bay Area journalist and Penthouse contributor who presently lives in Davis.

18 KM WEST OF VARNA

By Patricia Hickerson

At Pobiti Kamani
ancient site of oracles
she doesn't remember a
dry plain of underwater stones
only a sway of delicate birch trees
forested in the yellow sand of Black Sea soil.
Becalmed among the dappled spirits
she heard them sigh
in the language of Bulgaria.
She was quieted anyway.

RATTLESNAKE PRESS is Proud to Present...

SOME NEW FORGETTING

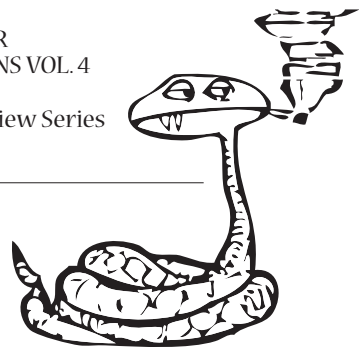
A new chapbook of poetry by WENDY PATRICE WILLIAMS
PLUS - A Littlesnake Broadside From RAY HADLEY

ON | Wednesday, November 12
7:30 PM

AT | THE BOOK COLLECTOR
1008 24th St., Sac.

PLUS | Our new 2009 HandyStuff
calendar from KATY BROWN:
BEYOND THE HILL:
A POET'S CALENDAR
and CONVERSATIONS VOL. 4
of B.L. KENNEDY's
Rattlesnake Interview Series

Check out rattlesnakepress.com
and look for DAILY
poetry/events/gossip on
MEDUSA'S KITCHEN
(medusaskitchen.blogspot.com)



SACRAMENTO AREA LITERARY EVENTS - NOVEMBER 2008

Mon, 11/3 [Camille Norton hosts]: Jan Beatty @spc,
7:30 pm

Tues, 11/4, 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.

Tuesday, 11/4 and 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, 11/5, 8pm Mahogany Poetry Series, and every
Wed night at Queen Sheba restaurant @ 1704
Broadway, with Khiry Malik Moore, open mic
and feature.

Wed, 11/5, 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, 11/6 and every Thurs 8pm, Open Mike and
featured poet at Lunas Café -- Feature TBA

Friday, 11/7, 7:00 - 9:00 pm, 1719 25th Street at HQ
for the Arts. Free & Family-Friendly. Featuring
Bob Stanley, Rebecca Morrison, Jenny Jiang,
& Jeff Knorr. Hosted by Cynthia Linville.

Sat, 11/8 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, 11/8 10-11:30, SPC 2nd and 4th Saturday
workshop facilitated by Emmanuel Sigauke
and Frank Dixon Graham located at South
Natomas Community Center next door to
South Natomas Library

2921 Truxel Road, Sacramento, CA. Bring 10 copies
of your one page poem. contact or for info:
grahampoet@aol.com

Mon, 11/10 [Emmanuel Sigauke hosts]: Edward
Mycue and Nancy Keane @spc, 7:30pm

Wed, 11/12, 7:30 PM: Rattlesnake Press releases a
new rattlechap from Red Fox Underground

Poet Wendy Patrice Williams (Some New
Forgetting); a littlesnake broadside from
South Lake Tahoe Poet Ray Hadley; a 2009
calendar from Katy Brown (Beyond the Hill:
A Poet's Calendar) as well as Conversations,
Vol. 4 of B.L. Kennedy's Rattlesnake Interview
Series. @ The Book Collector, 1008 24th St.,
Sacramento. Free; refreshments and a read-
around will follow; bring your own poems or
somebody else's. Info: kathykieth@hotmail.com

Mon, 11/17, 730pm Ann Privateer and Edythe
Schwartz will read at the SPC HQ 1719 25th
St., Sac followed by an open mike.

Fri, 11/21, 7:30 to 9:00 The OtherVoice, sponsored
by the UU Church of Davis presents the
dynamic husband/wife team, Susan and
Joseph Finkleman. @ the church library
located at 27074 Patwin Road. Refreshments
and Open Mike follow so bring along a poem
to share.

Sat, 11/22, 10-11:30, SPC 2nd and 4th Saturday
workshop facilitated by Emmanuel Sigauke
and Frank Dixon Graham located at South
Natomas Community Center next door to
South Natomas Library

2921 Truxel Road, Sacramento, CA. Bring 10 copies
of your one page poem. contact or for info:
grahampoet@aol.com

Mon, 11/24 [Tim Kahl hosts]: Connie Post and Janet
Smith at SPC, 7:30 pm

Coming Soon:

Indigo Moor and Alice Anderson will read their poetry
in midtown Sacramento, for the SPC, Location TBA,
Monday, December 29, 2008 @ 7:30pm
For a more current calendar of events, always check:
<http://sacramentopoetrycenter.blogspot.com>
or <http://sacramentopoetrycenter.org>

"RELAX / I TELL THEM / YOU'RE INSIDE / POETRY NOW" - JULIA CONNOR