

**President's Message**

I'm looking at *Poetry Now*, January 1998 – over ten years ago, and Luke Breit's "President's Message" sits on the upper right corner of page two. Back then *PN* was a lively newsprint tabloid edited by Heather Hutcheson – this particular issue had 8 pages of poems, ads, and photos, plus the literary events calendar. "There is much to be grateful for in the world of literature, Sacramento style," Luke wrote, and he went on to thank workshop leader Laverne Frith "for two years of facilitating our Tuesday night writers' workshop." Luke also mentioned that the workshop would henceforth be "in the capable hands of Daniel 'Danyen' Powell, and we wish him *at least* another two years of continued success." Two years, indeed. Nearly *eleven* years have gone by, and under Danyen's guidance the Tuesday night writers group has helped dozens of local poets find their voice, improve their work, get published, and enjoy the company of other poets. He will no doubt give credit to the other members of the group, and try to deflect any compliment to his skills as a workshop leader. But if it is true that the students deserve the credit, then his leadership (for over a decade) is even more remarkable. Aren't the greatest teachers simply the ones who give students space to find their own way? Thanks, Mr. Powell, for your wisdom and your gifts to the local community of writers.

If this is in your hands in time, please remember December 3<sup>rd</sup> is our annual fundraiser at the Millers' home in East Sacramento. It promises to be a great evening – Jim DenBoer and Mary Mackey will be reading; Pat Grizzell, Steve Bird and Brady McKay – aka Junkyard Burlesque – will be playing. Me, I plan to be drinking it all in. Hope you can make it – your \$25 donation will be re-invested in America's original green technology – poetry. Call us at 979-9706 if you have questions or need directions.

A long and full year – it's always worth looking back, though we so often forget to. High points for me – the excitement of the High School poets contest at SPC; meeting with Al Young and the community poets laureate in the State Library; the SPC workshop in April (Mark your calendar for April 3 and 4, 2009). So many fine readings at 25<sup>th</sup> and R, I can't keep track – all these events took a lot of work by our board members – Tim, Emmanuel, Frank, Rebecca, Sandra, Brad, Mary, Stan – you know how much time it takes. We have some exciting new projects planned for 2009, including our first ever full-length book contest. And you heard it here first – in 2009 we celebrate SPC's 30<sup>th</sup> year – we started back in 1979!

As *Sunset* magazine noted in the November issue, Sacramento is a literary town. It's exciting to be in an overflow crowd at Luna's, pocket a new *Poems-for-All* miniature, or witness the intensity of a Saturday night at Underground Books, and there are plenty of superb readings at the colleges as well. To get to all of them would be a full-time job. Hmm, now there's something to consider. In the meantime, thanks to all who fill this town with verse - may poets continue to share their work and spread the word: there's somebody out here needs to be heard!

Bob Stanley

December 2008

## TWO POEMS BY PHILIP A. WATERHOUSE

### **Kahlua**

By Philip A. Waterhouse

The narrow coastal road to Hana  
from Wailuku, usual twilight rain shower,  
tiny amphibians falling down on you, too,  
out of trees and frog-legging up to challenge  
your jeep from secret holes  
in the single-lane causeway  
along the marvelous sea sands shoreline  
to the enchantment Isle of Maui.

A less well known other roadway leads  
in-island to an unexpected way  
of life not hyped as tourist-attractive –  
arid land tended by  
natural stands of huge cactus,  
herds of real range cattle tended  
by genuine native Hawai'ian cowhands  
juicing tobacco strands.

Then, back to the luau as seductively  
brochured, lasso and sombrero optional  
accessories.

### **Sand Piper**

By Philip A. Waterhouse

Beach bum, not used to living in luxury but adaptable,  
seeks companion of careless hair, vagrant spirit, and  
abundant hunger for the arts, for deep-dish lady at ease  
with dinner party gabble prefers plain kitchen table talk,  
merry widow of independent means don't let clouds  
sock in, blues lock in, for mate of similar persona and,  
without any old baggage, move to her plum shore anytime.  
For confidentiality, both us, please respond to POB 245  
Reclusive But Not Shy.

Ann Privateer is a poet, photographer, and  
retired school teacher who grew up in  
Cleveland, Ohio but has lived in northern  
California most of her life. Her poems have  
appeared in Manzanita, Poetry and Prose of  
the Mother Lode and Sierra, The Arts of  
the Sierra & Sacramento Region, Poetalk,  
Sex in Public, Tiger's Eye, Steele, and The  
Sacramento Anthology: One Hundred  
Poems.

### **Big Yawn**

By Ann Privateer

Someone warns there could be snakes  
so I sit on the picnic table, far  
from a risible moment in tall grass  
where I find a Hershey bar,  
watch my teeth marks star its wax like texture,  
as it becomes the perfect consistency  
in this soft sunlight. It's not desert hot  
like May or June that would turn it sticky.

Each bite produces more perfect tricky  
tooth impressions that I lick and swallow,  
a crescent shape of bites, a hallow  
hall of delicious, velvety mirrors  
on my tongue until it's gone.

Anne Peters, who has been published in the *Rattlesnake Review*, writes from a small patch of land in the Sierra Nevada foothills where she lives with her husband and sons. Although words have always fascinated her, she recently discovered a renewed and lasting interest in poetry.

Dinnertime  
By Anne Peters

A large wooden bowl of fresh greens,  
yellow peppers, coins of carrot  
from the farmer's market,  
drizzled with olive oil  
and tart balsamic vinegar.  
Homemade lasagna,  
with fresh tomatoes and basil,  
onions and oregano,  
garlic from the garden  
at the bottom of the hill.  
Hot Wheels parked haphazardly  
next to tall, cold glasses of milk.  
A crusty loaf of rosemary bread  
seeping melted butter beside a  
Lego rocket ship awaiting  
its next launch. Sauce-smudged faces  
beaming, recounting games won and lost,  
stories read, amazing discoveries made.  
Apples and pears,  
crisp and juicy from the trees  
outside the door, diced  
with care for little mouths.  
Above the dishes and chatter,  
two glasses briefly clink,  
eyes meet, a smile shared.

### Request for donations for our 2009 Remodel

We need furniture and lamps for our remodel.  
Make the Poetry Center the best little poetry venue  
in town. Donate your gently used or new furniture  
and lamp(s)!

Call 916.606.4303 to donate!

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

Intemperance  
By Patricia Hickerson

Girl and her books  
leave campus and the city for home  
6 pm she  
stands in a lava flow  
pulsing magma  
from the beat of the Dance Studio

Southbound headlights  
pick through Westside winter gloom  
shadow of frozen bricks  
of Academe

North winds  
sink her from sidewalk to subway –  
in the train's hot rush and sway  
fevered dreams erupt:  
last summer's molten kiss consumes her

Not the ice-blue embrace  
of Mother's house  
in the temperate zone

### Join SPC

\$30 annual membership gets you Poetry Now  
and Tule Review

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: SPC Membership  
1719 25th Street,  
Sacramento CA 95816

## Lisa Jones interviews Kate Moses on Sylvia Plath

Is the Sylvia Plath you know the one who put her head in an oven and left her children with two cups of milk or was she a survivor writing poetry with a sense of hope--an artist, who's work matured and became most inspired, through the experience of mothering? According to Kate Moses, both Plaths existed, but because her last and best volume of poetry, *Ariel*, was not released in accordance with her own editorial intentions, many readers never got to know the resilient side of Plath. Instead, Ted Hughes and her publishers produced a version placing the poems in the chronological order that Plath wrote them in (not as she edited them), including darker poems that she had intended to leave for another book. In 2004, *Ariel* was re-released as Plath intended, but when Kate Moses was first inspired to write about Plath, she had to take the original published version to Kinkos. She couldn't rest until she'd reassembled the poems in Plath's intended order. That night Moses knew her first novel would be about the Plath that wrote *Ariel*.

Though the novel, *Wintering*, is a fictional account, it is based on extensive research--Moses went to London to study Plath's letters and notes in addition to studying the many journals and published volumes about Plath. Anne Stevenson, a renowned poet and biographer of Plath, praises *Wintering* as "an admirably just and unexaggerated work" and the *Boston Globe* described it as "lush, luminous prose."

Moses has written a number of articles on Sylvia Plath and is also known for her work with Salon.com. With Camille Peri she co-edited *Mothers who Think* and *Because I Said So*. More information about *Wintering*, a longer excerpt of this interview, and a suggested reading list on Plath (recommended by Moses) are available at <http://sacramentopoetrycenter.blogspot.com/2008/12/kate-moses-interview.html>.

### How did you choose Sylvia Plath as the subject of your novel?

When I was first introduced to her work in college I found it terrifying. Also . . . I couldn't get beyond the image of her horrible death and see the work as separate from that.

About ten years later, after I graduated from University of Pacific (Stockton, CA), I got a job at a small literary publishing company in Berkeley, called North Point West, editing fiction and poetry. I was there for a number of years and I was eight months pregnant with my son. One day, sorting through the mail, there was a magazine and it had a stanza from "Morning Song":

All night your moth-breath  
Flickers among the flat pink roses. I wake to listen:  
A far sea moves in my ear.

I thought that was so beautifully strange, I had to read the rest of the poem. So I found it and it was such a stunning shift in how I had seen her in my own head, but also the most eloquent evocation of the separateness and the connection of mothers and their children, the complexity. I had never read anything like that, so I went out and bought the collected poems, a couple of biographies. I got the journals, and the *Bell Jar*. People thought I was really strange because those were the books I took with me when I gave birth to my son.

I was actually reading Sylvia Plath in the maternity ward and that was what I was reading while I had this tiny little baby, going through exactly the same experience of waking in the night hearing the baby crying. She became so important in my personal pantheon of literary voices, but I never thought I'd write about her . . .

**[Years later, Moses returned to Plath to look up a quote from Plath's journals on writer's block which led her to reassemble Plath's poems and reflect on Plath's original intention that Ariel begin with the word "love" and end with the word "spring." Moses describes her reaction . . .]**

It was mind-blowing. I realized that there was a narrative running through this book and it was a story she was telling about her own life. It made so much sense to me. I could picture her in the moment of putting this manuscript together, making the strategic editorial decisions of where to place the poems, so they would resonate with each other . . . . I had a sense of "I know what she was thinking." Which was probably incredibly arrogant of me [laughter], but I had a sense of the story!

. . . . At that time . . . the only person who had written about Plath's version of Ariel was Marjorie Perloff, . . . when I read [Perloff's article] I realized that Perloff's thinking was very much in line with my sense of what the story was doing, but for me it was more on an intuitive level . . . . Even though rationally I thought "the last thing you want to do is take on this iconic writer that so many people feel proprietary about . . . I had to do it, because I felt so moved by her courageous attempt to save herself . . . .

**[It] is so interesting that [Ted Hughes, a poet and Plath's estranged husband] made the choice to go against [the narrative that she had intended for Ariel].**

There's a convoluted, difficult story related to that. . . . Plath was so excessively efficient in sending out her work that . . . by the first week of February, she had already sent out almost all of those poems to journals or magazines. So they were already in circulation--some of those from the last six weeks of her life, which she did not intend to put in Ariel, like "Edge" and "Words"--these came from a different kind of inspiration. The Ariel poems were triumphant--a woman seizing her power, a phoenix rising from the ashes. The poems from the last weeks of her life were really bleak and chilling, lacking in a sense of hope and redemption. Completely different from the Ariel poems in tone . . . .

I think on the one hand [Hughes] was trying to make the best book he could and he wanted to make as much money as possible for his children--for her children--and do the best by her. I honestly believe that he was trying to do the best by her that he could at the same time that he censored the manuscript, by taking out poems that were particularly caustic towards her mother, or friends, or toward herself. [He also destroyed one of Plath's journals].

. . . . I saw a lot of the correspondence that he had with various editors when he was negotiating the sale of Ariel and there was a lot of back and forth. It was clear that people really wanted those scary poems in there. By reordering he created a very different narrative and that was the Sylvia Plath that we all ended up knowing.

**SPC's Annual Party at the Millers'**

Wed. Dec 3 from 6 to 8pm

Music by Pat Grizzell and Junkyard Burlesque

Readings by Mary Mackey and James DenBoer

Food and Drink, Raffle and Auction

\$25 per person donation/\$20 for members

979-9706 to rsvp or come as you are!

## TWO POEMS BY CHARLES H. HALSTED

A native of Cambridge, Mass., Charles H. Halsted moved to Los Angeles during his teens and later earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy and history from Stanford University in 1958. His career as an academic physician brought him to the UC Davis School of Medicine in 1974. During his decades in patient care, teaching, and medical research, he wrote more than 200 original scientific articles and reviews. As part of his transition toward retirement, he returned to his liberal arts interests and has studied in poetry workshops in Davis led by Hannah Stein and Julia Levine.

### Waking Rituals

By Charles H. Halsted

At first light cars move in the street below  
The distant warning moan of the dawn freight  
Closer, coos of the mourning dove

Still in cocoon I roll towards  
Her sleep-shrouded nakedness  
Spoon my bony angles to surround her soft curves  
I'm awake and alive, while with  
Rhythmic rise and fall of her rib cage  
She sleeps on warm and still

Birds call out some shrill some peeps  
Low washboard stutters of magpies  
Announce the gathering light of the sun  
Across the wheat fields  
Gray turns to gold, distant oaks now  
Dark to brilliant greens  
Sunlight bursts through close-in leaves and pine needles

I splash cold water on my face  
Get the tea water to a boil  
Scalding heat oxygen tiny leaves  
Burst magical aromas and tastes  
All the way from Ceylon to my brain  
My senses now at their height  
I move into the day

### The Watch Fixer

By Charles H. Halsted

*Thunderstorms ahead fuel low we must divert the plane*  
The cross-country flight veers sharply northward

*In the event of a water landing*  
Heart pills in pocket pulse steady  
*Leave all personal items behind*

I look down  
My watch has stopped

A solid black face, its silver hands gauge time  
Smaller rings mark weekday and date  
One loose ring traps the minute hand  
My watch has stopped

From the faraway airport  
Alone in rented car  
On untraveled two-lane roads  
Thunderclaps, lightning crackles  
Strange landscapes in the darkening mist  
To the old family house on the shore  
Where my mother was born  
She's now buried in the garden  
Below rain-splattered windows of my childhood  
My watch has stopped

Sun breaks through the morning  
In town the expert watch fixer  
Lifts off the crystal  
Frees the minute hand  
Handing me the watch  
She smiles  
The second hand sweeps on  
A lifetime of minutes, hours

Lisa M. Cronkhite has published work in *Combat Magazine*, *Clark Street Review*, *Salome Magazine*, *The Penwood Review*, *Scrap & Stamp Arts Magazine*, *The Shepherd*, *Soul Fountain* and *Fighting Chance Magazine*. She is currently taking a writer's course for children based in Connecticut.

**The Lake of My Dreams**

By Lisa M. Cronkhite

She has given up feeling--gone numb  
--let her skin freeze. Watched her organs fail  
to thrive below frigid water--turn to stone.

Her face, pale white like the winter clouds  
gazed upon a December moon as snowflakes  
adorn her eyelids, sealing them shut.

Her flowing hair breathes along the current--  
a black mane of silk, with flecks of blue ; caresses her  
as she lies beneath sheets of ice-- a place  
she has gone before.

***Rattlesnake Press is proud to present***

**A new chapbook of poetry by**

**DANYEN POWELL**

**plus**

**a littlesnake broadside from KEVIN JONES**

*WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 7:30 PM*

**The Book Collector, 1008 24<sup>th</sup> St., Sac.**

*plus the latest issue of Rattlesnake Review!*

Also available now at The Book Collector:

Our 2009 calendar from Katy Brown, plus

***CONVERSATIONS, VOL. 4* from the  
Rattlesnake Interview Series**

Check out [rattlesnakepress.com](http://rattlesnakepress.com)

and look for **DAILY**  
**poetry/events/gossip** on  
**MEDUSA'S KITCHEN**



Sacramento Area

# Literary Calendar

December 2008

Monday 1 1719 25th Street at HQ for the Arts. Featuring James DenBoer and Elyssa White (host: Art Mantecon)

## Tuesday 2

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.

7:00 pm and every Tuesday:

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

## Wednesday 3

The Bistro, 3rd and F Streets in Davis, 1st and 3rd Wednesdays. Free.  
530.756.4556 [aojones@ucdavis.edu](mailto:aojones@ucdavis.edu)  
[http://www.bistro33.com/bistro33\\_davis](http://www.bistro33.com/bistro33_davis) for schedule

8pm

Mahogany Poetry Series, and every Wednesday night at Queen Sheba restaurant @ 1704 Broadway, with Khiry Malik M., Slam, open.

## Thursday 4

8:00 pm and every Thursday:

Open Mike and featured poet at Lunas Café -- Feature TBA

## Saturday 6

Every 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday

Rhythm N Rhymes: open mike, webcast & filmed for public TV @ Butch N Nellie's, near corner of 19th & I.  
[myspace.com/RNRshow](http://myspace.com/RNRshow)

## Monday 8

7:30 pm

1719 25th Street at HQ for the Arts. Free & Family-Friendly. Featuring David Iribarne and Gabrielle White and Shevonna Blackshire

## Wednesday 10

7:30 pm

Rattlesnake Press is proud to present a new chapbook from Danyen Powell; a littlesnake broadside from Kevin Jones; and a brand-new issue of Rattlesnake Review (#20)! Join us at The Book Collector, 1008 24th St., Sacramento. Free. Refreshments and a read-around will follow: bring your own poems or somebody else's.

## Friday 12

7:00 - 9:00 pm

1719 25th Street at HQ for the Arts. Free & Family-Friendly. Featuring Neruda-translator William O'Daly, Joyce Odam, Katy Brown, and more. Hosted by Cynthia Linville.

## Saturday 13

10:00 am - 11:30 am

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](mailto:grahampoet@aol.com)

## Monday 15

7:30 pm

Winter Solstice Read Around SPC HQ 1719 25th St., Sac

## Friday 25

7:30pm to 9:00pm

The OtherVoice, sponsored by the UU Church of Davis presents an Open Reading for all who have a poem(s) of thanksgiving, hope, faith, humor, or dreams of peace on earth to celebrate this holiday season...not by spending money but spending time together to enrich our spirits.

## Saturday 27

10:00 am ♦ 11:30 am

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](mailto:grahampoet@aol.com)

## Monday 29

7:30 pm

Indigo Moor and Alice Anderson and Jeanne Wagner will read at the SPC 1719 25th St., Sac.



**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](http://sacramentopoetrycenter.org).

**Please submit** to [clinville@csus.edu](mailto:clinville@csus.edu) or SPC, 1719 25<sup>th</sup> Street, Sacramento, CA 95816

**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.

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[grahampoet@aol.com](mailto:grahampoet@aol.com)

**Poetry Editor:** Cynthia Linville

**Contributing Editor:** Tim Kahl

**Interviews:** Lisa Jones

**Book Reviews:** Emmanuel Siguake

**Design Editor:** Henry Chen

**Calendar Editor:** Aaron Gerwer

Please submit events to be listed on the calendar to [aaronscrub@yahoo.com](mailto:aaronscrub@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

Emmanuel Siguake, Member at large

Contact us at

1719 25<sup>th</sup> Street, Sacramento CA 95816

[bobstanley@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bobstanley@sbcglobal.net)

916-979-9706

Or visit our website at

# 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**

For more information, please visit our website:

<http://www.sacramentopoetrycenter.org>

<http://www.sacramentopoetrycenter.org>

December 2008



poetry now

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Sacramento's literary calendar & review

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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.