



# poetry now

The Sacramento Poetry Center's Monthly Newsletter Journal for

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

Thanks to all who helped with our writers' conference – Tim Kahl, Sandra Senne, Kate Asche and everyone who helped; it was an inspiring 24 hours of poetry people talking, working, reading, writing, living poetry. Thanks to all the wonderful poets and writers who shared their art: William O'Daly, Camille Dungy, Camille Norton, Susan Kelly-Dewitt, Libby Kovacs, Matthew Zapruder, and Tim Kahl. (Funny how that name keeps coming up – Tim was the driving force behind this year's workshop.) We had a great crowd, and managed to find enough chairs and enough rooms for all. Julia Connor spoke about the vitality of SPC's conference at the laureates' reading on the following Monday, and she said it was the best event she had seen SPC put on "in years." Thanks, Julia, for the vote of confidence, and thanks to everyone who helped make it happen!

Speaking of laureates, the April 6<sup>th</sup> reading filled up California Stage, and Sacramento listeners had a chance to hear ten fine poets, including our own laureate Julia Connor, plus Dennis Schmitz, and the laureates from places as far as Healdsburg, Modesto, Sonoma County, Lake County, and San Luis Obispo. It was exciting to have such an array of writers in one room; poetry month was inaugurated well by these fine poet-citizens who have worked so hard for their communities. By the way, SPC Press's first book, the laureates' anthology *Sometimes in the Open* - is selling fast – I kid you not. If you want to get a copy of the first edition, you should probably let me know soon!

If you want to join the action at 25<sup>th</sup> and R this month, here's what's up. Brad Buchanan presents the finalists from this year's SPC High School Poetry Contest on May 4 at California Stage. I like the sound of Emmanuel Siguake's special event on May 11: "Farrah Field and Brad Buchanan perform *A Brief History of British Poetry from John Milton to Dylan Thomas*." Wonder why they stop at Dylan Thomas? On May 18, Rebecca Morrison presents Kirk Parker, and on May 25, Tim Kahl presents Joshua Clover and Jasper Bernes. All readings start at 7:30pm.

Other special events in May - We're planning a Second Saturday opening of the showing of works of photographer Michael Kelly-Dewitt on the evening of May 9. There might be some poetry going on amidst the photos as well; plans are still underway for this night, so check the SPC website. In fact, check the website anyway – thanks to Richard Hansen, the SPC site is bolder and clearer than ever (like a good poem). And if you missed a reading, or just want to browse, check out the extensive video files – carefully edited selections from some of the best readers we've had over the last few years. You might be in there yourself!

Plenty of sunshine, music, dance, poetry and artwork will grace Fremont Park on Saturday, May 16 from 11am to 2pm, as we present the Multicultural Children's Literary Arts Festival. SPC is co-hosting this event with Friends of Fremont Park, CADA, and city councilman Rob Fong. Come down to Fremont Park (16<sup>th</sup> and P Streets) and lend a hand, paint a picture, help a kid write a poem (or find a kid to help you write one). This is a brand-new SPC project, and we're looking forward to a lively event. Thanks to Rebecca Morrison, Theresa McCourt, Frank Graham, and many others for putting this together.

So, poetry month is over, they say. To me, it sounds like another one is on the way.

Bob

Joyce Odam has been published by hundreds of journals, including *the Christian Science Monitor*, *the Rattle*, *the Seattle Review*, *The Lyric*, and *the Bellingham Review* and has published more than fifteen books and chapbooks of poetry. Her many awards include Grand Prize winner of Artists Embassy International's Dancing Poetry Contest, the Voices International Bernie Babcock Memorial Award, and the California Federation of Chaparral Poets Golden Pegasus Award (twice). She was editor of *Poetry Depth Quarterly*, and since its closing, she focuses on her monthly *Brevities* and her work with Rattlesnake Press. She is featured in *Poets on Deck*, a deck of playing cards that celebrates Sacramento poets from the late 1960's to the very early 1980's which is available at the Crocker, the Book Collector, and Time Tested Books.

## LIGHTHOUSE

By Joyce Odam

If I were the sea  
I would use you for a focal point:  
your light for my darkness;

I would use you for a boundary  
to gauge my edge against;  
I would know where I

could test my calm and fury—  
let my ships beware—  
warn my whales—

and give your shore-gulls praise  
for marking stormy skies  
with their whiteness.

I would always know where you are  
so I could ever surge toward you  
with my lonely power.

## Maybe A Robe With Roses

By Joyce Odam

*"My Life In Robes"—Leonard Cohen*

*My life in roses . . .*

I thought this is what you meant to say,

but words melt in the rain  
when compromise is made.

What else is there to believe  
but what one wants to hear?

You always were the one  
to speak into silence

as though it were a script  
for tragedy—and roses

seemed a likely word to say,  
whatever the stage of surrender.

You lick the blood from your finger  
when I mention this.

*(p. 2) Book of Longing—Leonard Cohen*

Richard Luftig is a professor of educational psychology and special education at Miami University in Ohio. Luftig received the Cincinnati Post-Corbett Foundation Award for Literature and was a semi finalist for the Emily Dickinson Society Award. His poems have appeared in numerous literary journals in the United States and internationally in Japan, Canada, Australia, Finland, and England. His third chapbook of poems was published in 2007.

### **Our Days**

By Richard Luftig

Like sparks or smoke  
with no hint of flame,

the past is always  
present. Memories

have a way of singeing  
our outstretched arms,

scorching our hearts  
at the most unexpected

moments. We keep  
reaching for them

like fresh hammered  
coins kiln-hot

in our pockets,  
just to be sure

that enough  
are still there.

*Coming from Rattlesnake Press!*  
*Sinfonietta*  
a new chapbook by Tom Goff

*Shorts: Quatrains and Epigrams*  
by Iven Lourie  
inaugurating Rattlesnake LittleBooks  
(a new format)

*Conversations, Vol. 5*  
from the Rattlesnake Interview Series  
by B.L. Kennedy

*Join us May 13, 7:30 PM for all of this*  
*at The Book Collector*  
*1008 - 24<sup>th</sup> St., Sacramento*

*Then, on Thursday, May 16:*

*Join us at Poetry Unplugged*

*for the premiere of the*

*second issue of WTF!!!*

*—a free, quarterly journal*

**Next deadline for**  
***Rattlesnake Review (#21)***

**is May 15!**

...and look for DAILY

poetry/events/gossip on

MEDUSA'S KITCHEN

William S. (Bill) Gainer is known for the openness of his confessional poetry and is recognized as one of the founding contributors to the modern movement of "After Hours Poetry." He is widely published and continues to be a sought after reader. Gainer can be previewed at [billgainer.com](http://billgainer.com)

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. Her broadside *At Grail Castle Hotel* was recently published by Rattlesnake Press.

### **The Remains of the Night**

By William S. Gainer

Waking early,  
finding the sun,  
it didn't expect you  
and you didn't expect it.

That's the worst part.  
Waiting for the coffee  
to perk  
is the second.

The rest is done,  
nothing found,  
nothing lost,  
nothing to lie about,  
just warm sheets,  
sweet smells  
and a soft voice saying,  
"Turn out the lights."

You pull the shades  
and let her sleep,  
pour yourself a coffee  
and think about  
walking  
to the corner  
for a paper -

You pick up her shoes,  
hang her stockings  
over the back of the chair  
and watch her sleep,

decide -  
the paper  
can wait...

### **The Virgin Springs**

By Patricia Hickerson

She stands at the brink  
*maybe now*  
(words of the moment)

she splashes in—  
newly leafed trees  
from brookside  
bend over her  
*not yet*

she puddles her way  
to a stony ridge  
parting the rippled mirror  
skips from rock to slippery rock  
enters a broad blazing waterway

decades of mothers  
spook this river, she decides,  
her toes curled this way  
then that

full force catches up with her  
she bobs up and down  
gasping  
along with a rush of last year's leaves  
scrambling hustling seeking the edge

she leaps out  
lands on a slope of new mud

not yet caught  
she will hide over there  
in that bed of lavender weeds  
until he finally discovers her

Ann Wehrman teaches English part-time at American River College while working to complete her Second BA in Music (Flute) at CSU, Sacramento, where she also earned her MA in English (Creative Writing) in 2005. Ann has published locally in *Poetry Now*, *Rattlesnake Review*, and *Medusa's Kitchen* (online), and in 2007 Rattlesnake Press published a broadside of her poetry.

### **Aerie**

By Ann Wehrman

Past massive, antediluvian trees,  
their fresh new tips dancing  
in stratospheric blue and golden sunlight  
overhead, invisible beyond dusty webs  
and chattering, hiding birds—  
we press on, graying yet still eager;  
climb the back hills up,  
out of one more ravine;  
gain a clearing atop the rise,  
the valley below  
a lake of redwood crowns  
revealing spring's green in waves.

Standing, breathing,  
I slowly regain feeling in legs sorely tried,  
my pounding heart relenting,  
sweat weighing down my shirt,  
cloying on my face and arms,  
evaporating, along with my annoyance  
at my body's discomfort,  
in the clean breeze over the mountaintop.

Your grin shows you knew all along of  
this remote, perfect fairy circle,  
taller peaks rising beyond to the North.  
You touch me, and your callused hands reassure,  
as does the farsight in your blue eyes,  
searching the sun's position,  
checking the hilltop's lean,  
scouting for tinder, fuel.

In the middle of the night,  
blackness alive with stardust,  
we hold each other by the fire you built;  
night bathes the hills,  
eons tilt and circle overhead, constellations wheel—  
we nestle, safe at the top of this mountain,  
in the center of the universe.

***SPC Poetry Contest Begins  
May 1 – as many entries as  
you wish at \$3 a poem.***

### **So Brightly They Fall**

By Ann Wehrman

Ivory clusters,  
tossed by spring's gusts,  
break apart  
petal by petal;

skid onto stained, stinking pavement;  
mound softly at gutter's edge;  
bruise, darken, dissolve  
overnight in the rain

## Lisa Jones interviews Li-Young Lee

The accomplished Li-Young Lee is a quintessential lyric poet with a passion for metaphysical contemplation and introspection. He is known both for the lush immediacy of his writing and for his engaging articulation of a legacy of racism and exile. Lee's family settled in the U.S. when he was seven. His Chinese parents were forced to travel through several countries with Lee and his siblings, during which time his father (a deeply religious Christian and former physician to Mao Tse-Tung) experienced torture and imprisonment.

His latest book, *Behind My Eyes* (2008, Norton) continues to memorialize his family relations, but is more so an excavation of the soul, that is both sensuous and simple, and resonant with the power of negative capacity. Lee has published four other books, won numerous grants and awards (including an NEA and a Guggenheim), and is featured in a documentary, *Poetry of Resilience*. There is also a book of interviews with him: *Breaking the Alabaster Jar*, that clarify in greater depth, Lee's ideas in this interview about poetry and the "outgoing/dying breath".

I contacted Lee when I learned he will be reading his poems in Stockton on April 28 (7-8 p.m. at Morris Chapel, at University of the Pacific in Stockton; reception at 6:30). I spoke to him on the phone for an hour, wherein he conveyed a deep admiration of Dickinson and Rilke and pondered deep philosophical questions with seriousness, humor and humility. A longer version of this interview will soon be available at [sacramentopoetrycenter@blogspot.com](mailto:sacramentopoetrycenter@blogspot.com).

**Jones: Do you see yourself as having changed in your writing, when you compare this book to your previous books?**

Lee: I hope it has gotten real simple, even simpler. I hope the lines have more levels of relationship, not only sounds, information, visual, sonic, erotic, intellectual, feeling. I want all of it, but I want it as simple as possible. . . . I think poetry should be a demonstration of some kind of other knowledge.

. . . . Poetry is a kind of favored language. It makes the claim that it is at least half divine. If not complete, at least half . . . . Saturation of presence is one of the criteria in divine speech and I think poetry aspires to divine speech.

It is an absolutely ridiculous and really dangerous (laughs) proposition.

**Jones: Dangerous because . . .**

Lee: Well it unleashes all kinds of crazy inflations and mis-identifications. You don't know what is yours and what's God's, what's deaths, what's not. There are these exchanges being made--I think with poetry the words relate to each other on more levels. For me, that would be a definition.

. . .

The overriding fiction of all great lyric poetry is speaking right before your death, that death created an urgency, an intensity that led to a kind of sorting of words. You sort words more frugally in a poem than you would in fiction. I don't think that sorting of words is just for beauty. It comes out as beauty, but I think the pressure of that sorting comes from this over-riding fiction that it is a spontaneous utterance right before your death. You can't even do it. So it takes years to actually do that, to speak from a kind of experience of complete knowing.

Jones: I haven't actually experienced much loss from death. Do you think that if someone doesn't see death in their work, do you think maybe they're just not conscious yet, of how death is shaping their lives?

Lee: *My sense is that one doesn't have to have experienced it. I think if you never experienced it--if everyone you have known is still alive, I still think that when you come to the page and you imagine this fiction and imagine it completely, that can lead you to a language and a knowledge about yourself--I think it is fruitful knowledge. It is self-knowledge.*

Jones: So it is really knowledge of our own mortality (more than death itself) that is profoundly urging us to write.

Lee: *Yes and to solve that problem. I think death is a problem. It is still a problem for me. I'm not at peace yet (laughs).*

...

*I think death is the subject of all lyric poetry . . . I'll tell you why I feel that it is about death, because a poem is the exhaled breath figured upon, variegated, filigreed, pocked and built and made up. We breath in in silence and the outgoing breath is the dying breath. So all poems are basically a song for the dying breath. Whatever you are talking about, what you are actually doing is ransoming the dying breath to make it worthy of keeping. Otherwise it is not a feeding breath. The meaning of poetry is actually a feeding breath, but the actual breath is outgoing for the human being doing it--there's an opposite thing going on there.*

*The most extreme case is the increase in divinity is experienced as a decrease in the vitality of the mortal being. So it is a kind of death. There's a kind of a death of the ego that is experienced before the death of the body and I think the ego mind is the mind that attaches to the body, that attaches to the fear of the extinction of the body.*

*The Chinese say you shave that ego way back so that there's more and more divinity in your life, but that sounds--that's "religious" stuff! But I do think you can't escape it! You can't escape the religious dimension of human beings and I think it can't be abandoned in art, because that's the source. I can't locate the ultimate word--the verdict. I don't trust human beings enough to locate the final word . . . the pronouncement, the great story, the meaning, the all narrative, the mother narrative. I can't leave that up to human beings. I don't trust human beings.*

...

Jones: You talk about how poetry comes from some "anonymous center"

Lee: *Right. I got that from Rilke.*

Jones: Does that faith ever falter --that that's in you to be discovered? Do you always know that that is there and it is just a question of whether you will access it?

Lee: *You know when it does falter, I climb my way back. I reread . . . You look up current information in books in, let's say quantum physics, and then you realize "Oh, o.k. it is still a mystery. They're still looking at their own mind." Every time they notice--when they look at a field of photons or whatever--they're still coming to the conclusion "Oh, what we see is our own mind." So then you just start back up and you realize at the highest levels of thought--in all the great sciences, in all the great arts that have gone before us, all the great philosophers, all the great fiction writers--it's there all the time. You don't need a lack of faith. All you have to do is swear to live at the quantum level--of reality, which is a scientific fact. If you even swear to do that, that's religious. That whole quantum stuff is religious. It is not of this realm.*

*Because we know that in the quantum realm there's no cause and effect, for instance. They just discovered that, so they can't figure out what does that mean, because it looks like cause and effect is all there is in the realm of space and time, but they're doing all these experiments with that super collider . . . but what are they talking about! And there's some shaman in Indonesia that I visited and she said "No, there's no cause and effect. Those are "little" powers. There are more powerful powers that aren't cause and effect." She said they are older-- I'm just saying that this is the whole context.*

Jones: It sounds like you just look at the world, engage with it and the mysteries you confront--it just makes it obvious that there is something else.

Lee: *Yeah. You know when Einstein viewed quantum behavior of light photons--he called it "spooky action at a distance."*

Jones: *(laughs)*

Lee: *That is cool, right? Spooky action at a distance.*

. . .

Jones: You have said that the very composition of a poem can change the world.

Lee: . . . *The order proposed in a lyric poem is closer to quantum order (without cause and effect), closer to synchronistic order--everything happening simultaneously on different levels. So the order proposed in a lyric poem--that has to line up with everything we know.*

*When that happens, that's when you get a great lyric poem. It is worth a whole lifetime's work. Sometimes it is worth a whole life time's work.*

--

Lisa Jones

[lisawritesagain@gmail.com](mailto:lisawritesagain@gmail.com)

Josh Gruver is a junior at Cordova High School in Rancho Cordova, California. His interests include running Track and Cross Country, bicycling, and singing in choir. For the past five years he has participated in the California Music Educators Association Capitol Section Choirs, and has medaled in both Cross Country and Track. In 2008, he was awarded the Coaches Award for Most Inspirational Player for his contributions to the Cordova High School football team. Josh enjoys working at Bob's Cycle Center in Fair Oaks during the summer months. His favorite literary work is *Lord of the Flies*.

### **Tree in a Storm**

By Josh Gruver

Flowing freely  
In the dark and cold wind  
The street lights glimmer  
Rain falls faster than lightning  
Hitting a tree  
Lightning scrapes the midnight sky  
With nails of fury clashing on a chalk board  
As the tree sits outside my window  
It flows freely as like  
A butterfly in a windy field of wavy grass



Shawn Aveningo, resides in Rescue, CA, grew up in St Louis, MO, has lived throughout various area of the US and Germany, while raising her three children. Through the years she has enjoyed diverse careers in software development, consulting, sales and real estate, as well as volunteered in the local schools and community. You can see more of her work published in *Rattlesnake Review*, *Medusa's Kitchen*, *PoetryNow*, *Poetz*, *WTF*, and *Survivor's Review*.

### **Runaway**

By Shawn Aveningo

Five year old girl in pigtails  
draggin' old Samsonite in the snow,  
colored bulbs lit on the eaves.  
Surely she's now on his naughty list.  
The lamp broken,  
this she could not deny.  
So why the need to lie?  
It only confirmed a mother's wish...  
she'd never been born.  
So to escape sharp bristles of a wig brush,  
or the harsh snap of the strap,  
she would run,  
as far away as her galoshes would take her,  
or at least to the end  
of the driveway.

### **Play for Me Claire de Lune**

By Shawn Aveningo

Forget-Me-Not, the label  
on the seed packet read,  
(nomenclature for non-botanists),  
those flowers blue, like my mood,  
a funk I can't seem to shake,  
I try to escape,  
forget, as I wonder  
would they remember?  
The amber vial empty, palm open, body  
limp on linoleum. Would they  
remember  
my request for Debussy?  
The final chord, my placebo  
to a farewell.

Art From Jose Montoya's Sketchbook



Sacramento Area Literary Events

May 2008

Sat, 5/2 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](http://myspace.com/RNRshow)

Mon, 5/4, High School Poetry Contest Reading @ SPC, 1719 25th St.

Tues, 5/5, Room to Write class taught by John Allen Cann on Philip Levine @ SPC, 1719 25th st.

Tues, 5/5, 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.

Tues, 5/5 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, 5/6, 8pm Mahogany Poetry Series, and every Wed night at Queen Sheba restaurant @ 1704 Broadway, with Khiry Malik M., Slam, open. [malikspeaks@aol.com](mailto:malikspeaks@aol.com)

Wed, 5/6, 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

Thurs, 5/7 and every Thurs 8pm, Open Mike and featured poet at Lunas Café -- Feature TBA

Sat, 5/9, 10-1130am, 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)

Mon, 5/11, 7:30pm, Farrah Field and Brad Buchanan performs "A Brief History of British Poetry from John Milton to Dylan Thomas" hosted by Emmanuel Sigauke @ SPC 1719 25th st.

Weds, 5/13 Rattlesnake Press presents: a new rattlechop, *Sinfonietta*, from Tom Goff; Vol. 5 of *Conversations*, the Rattlesnake Interview Series by B.L. Kennedy; and the inauguration of a new series, *Rattlesnake LittleBooks, with Shorts: Quatrains and Epigrams* by Iven Lourie. at The Book Collector, 1008 24th St., Sacramento, 7:30 PM. Free!

Friday, 5/15, 7:30, The Other Voice presents two wonderful poets: Andy Jones and Danyen Powell. The reading is in the library of the UU Church of Davis located at 27074 Patwin Road. We close for the summer so our next reading will be in

September. Refreshments and Open Mike follow so bring along a poem or two to share.

Sat, 5/16, 11am-2pm, Multicultural Children's Literary Arts Festival at Fremont Park. For info call 916-606-4303 or email @ [mccaf@jps.net](mailto:mccaf@jps.net)

Sat, 5/16, 10am Writers of the New Sun/Escritores del Nuevo Sol have a new meeting date: the 3rd Saturday of each month. Coming dates are: April 18, May 16, June 20. The 10 AM potluck meetings are at La Raza Galeria Posada, 1024 - 22nd St., midtown Sacramento. Call ahead to confirm: 916-456-5323. Members of all skill levels support each other via readings, exercises, critiques and information, writing in English, Spanish, or both. To request information, call 916-456-5323.

Sat, 5/16 and ever third Saturday at 7pm, Celebration of Word, Sound and Paint. Carol's Books, 1913 Del Paso.

Mon, 5/18, 730pm, Kirk Parker, Cameron Parker, and Joseph Pratt read hosted by Rebecca Morrison @ SPC 1719 25th St.

Mon, 5/25, 730pm, Joshua Clover and Jasper Bernes hosted by Tim Kahl @SPC 1719 25th St.

Mon, 5/25, 730pm, Joshua Clover and Jasper Bernes hosted by Tim Kahl @SPC 1719 25th St.

**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).

**Submit** poems and a 30-50 word bio to [clinville@csus.edu](mailto:clinville@csus.edu). (Electronic submissions preferred.) Submissions may also be mailed along with a SASE to 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 916-979-9706.

**Editor:** Frank Graham [grahampoet@aol.com](mailto:grahampoet@aol.com)

**Poetry Editor:** Cynthia Linville

**Website and Contributing Editor:** Tim Kahl

**Proofreader:** Martha Ann Blackman

**Interviews:** Lisa Jones

**Book Reviews:** Emmanuel Sigauke

**Design Editor:** Henry Chen

**Calendar Editor:** Aaron Gerwer

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

Kate Asche, Member at large

Frank Graham, Member at large

Mary Zeppa, Member at large

Stan Zumbiel, Member at large

Brad Buchanan, Member at large

Emmanuel Sigauke, Member at large

Theresa McCourt, Member at large

Linda Collins, 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 [www.sacramentopoetrycenter.org](http://www.sacramentopoetrycenter.org).



Nicole Starsinic lives and works in Davis, California.

### **Untitled**

By Nicole Starsinic

maggie, crow, tractor, field  
summer long past and winter waiting  
I run beneath a canopy of olives  
where the magpies forage--  
acorn, cricket, beetle, stick  
valley heat bedded into  
the harvested earth  
while a green tractor pulls a scythe  
through a cloud of dust,  
the last of the hectares plowed--  
corn razed, tomato plants returned to seed  
while those raucous birds strut their yellow beaks  
across the cracked and pitted pavement.

### **The Smallest Things**

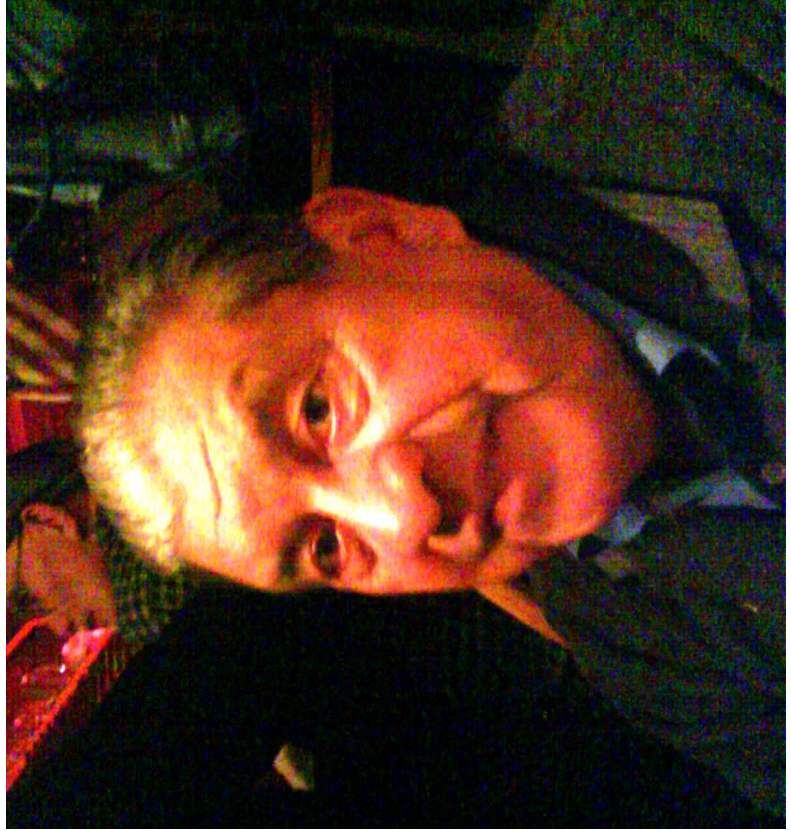
By Nicole Starsinic

what I know of loss  
are the smallest things.  
our three-year old digging for sowpills along the shore,  
his sister wading out to the small eddies,  
past the wavering heat of the day  
and the swiftly bending cattails,  
to where the canyon wall  
swallows the river in shadow  
while we call  
*stop*  
*come back*  
*you're too far*  
but already she is out of earshot  
legs lean from eleven summers of growth  
moving swiftly against the current  
so that the deeper she goes,  
the smaller she becomes  
and when we call out again,  
more urgently  
she turns,  
shielding her eyes against the sun,  
and waves  
as her brother wades on the water's edge  
calling plaintively after her  
*stop*  
*wait for me*  
*I want to go with you*

# poetry now

MAY 2009

<http://www.sacramentopoetrycenter.org>



A PUBLICATION OF THE SACRAMENTO POETRY CENTER

## poetry now

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

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
SACRAMENTO, CA  
PERMIT NUMBER 1956

### In This Issue:

Joyce Odam

Richard Luftig

William S. Gainer

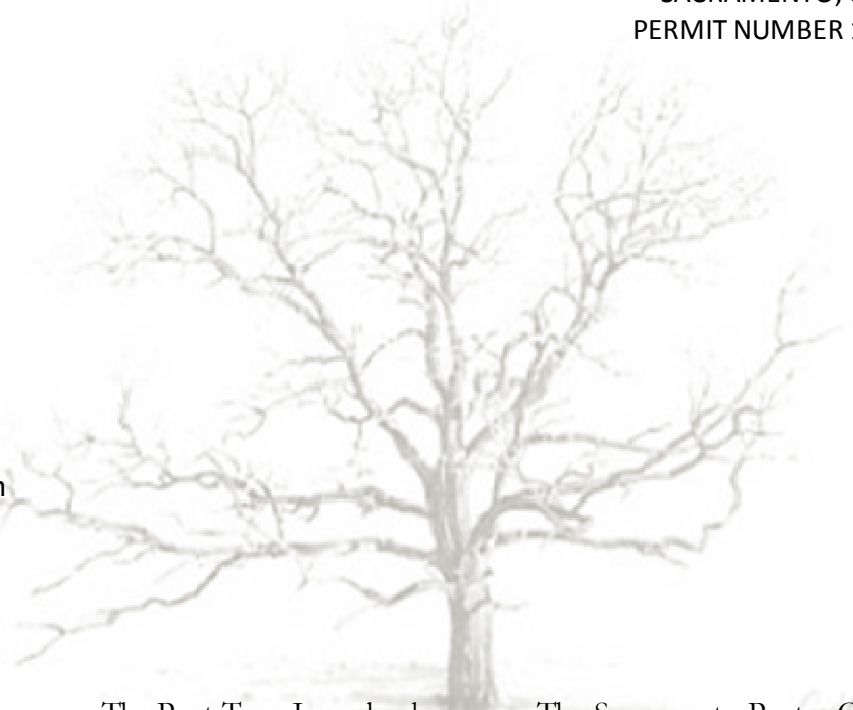
Patricia Hickerson

Ann Wehrman

Josh Gruver

Nicole Starsinic

Shawn Avenigo



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.