#### For Jim

Someone told me once it was like a river
And the rocks or maybe the islands get eroded away
Until at the end of the world there are just a few standing
Someone told me once that it was a long road
And the weary dropped out but there were those who just kept
trudging
Someone told me once that it is a natural process
But they lied

I can never explain the violence of separation I can never explain the phantoms of you just in the next room I can never explain because they are so real And who would I explain that to besides you?

Someone told me once that I was so lucky They told me all of the good ones were taken They didn't know that I knew it was true They didn't know that I knew everything Except one thing

I never knew the secrets in your heart
You told me so much
I opened up your chest once
When you were sleeping
And I saw that there were more questions than answers
I saw that there were corners and closets closed to me
I never did that again

I decided to love you anyway
I mean love all of you even if I didn't know what that was
I decided to love you always
Even though I didn't know how short always can be
I decided to love you all of you
Even though I don't know if you ever knew that I do

This is the cruelty
That today I cannot say your name in the past tense
And even more cruelly I am forbidden the future too

-Joseph Finkleman

## Let's Go to the River

Let's go to the river
let's use words
too big for closed rooms
let's bathe our breath
in pure air
let's heal
the low tide
in our mood

let's go to the river let's feed the fish with the remnants of forlorn expectation

let's go to the river
look upstream
look down and across
understand
the whole picture
see
how water mirrors
face cloud and sky

let's go let's become part of the river

—by Inge Judd

# Contributors to this issue:

Gail Rudd Entrekin, Joseph Finkleman, Colette Jonopulos, Inge Judd, Amy MacLennan, David Moody, Allegra Jostad Silberstein, Larry Starzec

## **Poetry Now**

Poetry Now, Sacramento's Literary REVIEW & CALENDAR, is published each month by the Sacramento Poetry Center and is funded in part with grants from the California Arts Council and the Sacrmento Cultural Arts Awards Program of the Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission with support from the City and County of Sacramento.

Submissions of poems, artwork, literary criticism, and other work of interest to the Sacramento poetry community are welcome. Work must be accompanied by a SASE for return. B&W or high contrast color photos & brief bios of submitters are encouraged. Please note that poems, reviews, etc. submitted to any of the Sacramento Poetry Center's publications may appear on the Sacramento Poetry Center's website: www.sacramentopoetrycenter.org. Please submit to 1631 K St., Sacramento, CA 95814. Poetry Now is widely distributed free in area bookshops, coffeehouses, laundromats, and select bars. Your membership gets Poetry Now, Tule Review and Rivers delivered to your door (or box).

Managing Editor: Robert Grossklaus (dphunkt@mac.com) Editorial Staff: Jody Ansell, Ann Conradsen, Tom Goff, Barbara Jennings, Pat Osfeld, and Ramona Soto Calendar Editor: Jody Ansell



The Sacramento Poetry Center is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to providing forums for local poets-including publications and reading series— and bringing to Sacramento the finest poetry we can get our hands on. Our offices are at 1631 K Street in the Sacramento Ballet Co. Bldg. Our phone number is 916-441-7395.

#### **Board of Directors:**

Martin McIlroy - President (916-457-5119)

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Staff:



## **President's Message**

Hello again,

#### Flor y Canto CD progress

Well, it is almost completed. During the month of August, I worked with my friend, Ray Downes, at his recording studio (Haven Recording Studio) to finish the master of the Flor  $\boldsymbol{y}$ Canto CD. The CD was created by attendees of the festival who stepped up to the mic at the Sacramento Poetry Center booth and recorded their own and others' poetry. It has been over five months since those two days in April, but I will tell you that it was worth the wait. The master sounds great because of the hard work Ray put into the editing. The final night took approximately 5 hours of work to get 1 hour 19 minutes and 51 seconds of poetry onto an 80-minute CD (otherwise 1 hour and 20 minute CD). I am now working on the cover and liner notes. Hopefully, the complete package will be available in the next few months. Lastly, I want to thank Ray Downes for his hard work at Haven Recording Studio

#### SPC receives CAC grant funding

The California Arts Commission (CAC) recently awarded 154 arts organizations grant funding from money collected from the California arts license plate program. \$940,000 was collected from this program, the most for any license plate program in the state. Over 1,000 arts organizations were considered in the state; most or all were past CAC grantees. SPC was one of the 154 organizations to meet the criteria set forth by CAC for service, programs, etc.

#### **Locks Festival**

Friday and Saturday, September 3-4, 2004 - THE SACRAMENTO LOCKS FESTIVAL - IN CELEBRATION OF OUR NATURAL HAIR - 1631 K Street in the Sacramento Ballet Building - Sacramento. Mark your calendar for Friday September 3, 7-11 pm. Festival Kick Off Reception and Reggae Dance Party with food, music and fun for the whole family - \$5 adults, children under 12 free.

Saturday, September 4, from 10 am to 6 pm, the Sacramento Locks Festival will feature hair presentations and demonstrations, vendors, food, music, poetry, information galore and much more - \$10 adults, children under 12 free. For vendor space, contact Karen Green at 916-478-2831 or email kgreen06@comcast.net. For more information about the Festival, email staajabu@yahoo.com. Proceeds will benefit the Jamaican and American Students Associating through Cultural Awareness program (JASAC), and Straight Out Scribes.

#### FairyTale Town

Fairytale Town will be holding their annual Book Celebration on September 19-20, from 10 am to 4 pm. Come out and play with us, and please call 916-441-7395 if you are interested in helping out at the Poetry Center's booth. Thank you.

#### The Pedestal to release special Political Issue

In early October, The Pedestal Magazine will release a special "political issue." We will be accepting works of poetry, fiction, and non-fiction, as well as art. All work should somehow address current political concerns, however popular or obscure, general or specific, they may be. We are open to all views and positions; i.e., liberal and conservative, Democrat and Republican, etc. There are no length restrictions. We are open to extended/complex works or brief statements, pieces that take on specific themes or are more generally philosophical in nature. We also welcome submissions (actually, we strongly request them) from people in countries other than the United States. If you would like to send us an accompanying photograph of yourself, please include one as an attachment in .jpg format.

We will not be offering payment to contributors; however, we will aggressively market the issue, as well as partner with various organizations in an attempt to reach and impact people around the world.

Send all work to pedmagazine@carolina.rr.com . If you are submitting artwork, please send all images as attachments

in .jpg format. In the subject line of the email, type: Submission/ Political Issue. Please DO NOT use the submission form provided on The Pedestal Magazine website to submit work for this special issue. Submissions deadline is September 21. Please feel free to email us at pedmagazine@carolina.rr.com, if you have any additional questions.

It is our intention to use as many pieces as possible, although we cannot guarantee that we will publish everything we receive. We look forward to including a wide variety of writings in this special release and wish you much inspiration during this time of excitement and difficulty.

All my best,

John Amen

The Pedestal Magazine www.thepedestalmagazine.com pedmagazine@carolina.rr.com

#### **U.S. Poet Laureate**

Great Plains poet Ted Kooser of Nebraska has been selected to be the next poet laureate of the United States. He has written ten collections of poetry and has accepted the position which will

An Iowa native and poet at age 18, Kooser graduated from Iowa State University in 1962 and earned his master's degree in English from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1968. He is a visiting professor and teaches writing in the university's English Department.

There is also another article in the Los Angeles Times, August 17, 2004 titled, "A Plains voice in trying times" that also has additional information.

#### **Local Poets in the News**

Congratulations to Kathleen Lynch, former host of the magnificent reading series at Barnes & Noble, who has won the Black Zinnias Prize -- \$2000 and publication of her book, Hinge . The judge was Richard Jones of Poetry East fame.

Congratulations to Do Gentry, who recently won the 2004 Permafrost Chapbook Competition.

#### A new course is starting this month on September

30th at the UC Davis Extension taught by Susan Kelly DeWitt. This course is available to members of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) for those 55 and older at no charge with paid membership. For information about OLLI go to http:// universityextension.ucdavis.edu/olli/. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

#### **FREE Subscriptions Greater Sacramento Arts** Reporter!

Any resident or organization in the greater Sacramento area may receive a free subscription to the bimonthly arts newsletter, The Greater Sacramento Arts Reporter. To be placed on the mailing list, email your name, address and request to smac@smac. org. or call (916) 566-3992. The next issue is due September 1,

Whether your interest is in the visual, performing media, or literary arts, you will find useful information and advice. The Arts Reporter, published by the Friends of the Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission, lists exhibits, tours, performances, film and video presentations, festivals, and literary readings. It also reports on grants, commissions, auditions, classes, and many other

This free multi-arts newspaper gives arts presenters a place to promote their activities. At the same time, arts consumers will appreciate the information about a wide variety of regional events and programs.

To see examples of the articles and information offered, go to www.artCAP.org for profiles of arts makers, on-line gallery images, recordings of live poetry readings and much more. To submit your listing for an event or opportunity, go online to the right hand column of the home page at www.artCAP.org . For information about the programs and activities of the Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission, go to www.sacculture.com.

a publication of the Sacramento Poetry Center

#### **DRIVING TOWARD NOVEMBER**

Her plan was to get in the car and drivenot anticipating ice-slicked Denver roads, Wyoming spread out like a faded quilt in late October. She isn't ready for the overturned semi or the sedan spun on its side—how easy to turn your head and keep driving, she thinks. There is no one to talk to except the perky night clerk with a ring through her nose and tattoos of snakes circling her wrists. The bed is covered with red paisley, cigarette burns, the stench of old tobacco. A no-smoking sign sits on the nightstand next to the telephone, a clock that flips once a minute. Hot water removes mascara, spilled coffee, oatmeal cookie crumbsit runs the length of her still-taut legs, onto painted toenails just beginning to chip. The phone rings ten

times, then five more; she holds her mouth open under the prickly spray, pretending this too is part of her plan.





MAXINE HONG KINGSTON Friday, October 29, 2004



**DAVID SEDARIS** Monday, November 8, 2004



WENDELL BERRY Thursday, February 17, 2005



NAOMI SHIHAB NYE Thursday, March 3, 2005



IRA GLASS Thursday, April 21, 2005

## **Season Subscriptions**

California Lectures at (916) 737-1300

www.californialectures.org

## **Single Tickets**

Tickets.com or (916/530) 766-2277 Crest Theatre • 7:30 p.m.

Colette Jonopulos



Is your library overflowing? Consider sharing and help Wellspring Women with your donation...

We are collecting gently used books of POETRY to increase and diversify our library collection.

Please drop your donations off at the Sacramento Poetry Center office: 1631 K Street at the corner of 17th and K. There will be a large box outside the office door. Thank you!

# Literary Calendar for September 2004

Note: Unless otherwise noted, all events take place in Sacramento, CA; phone numbers are in the 916 area code.

#### 1 Wednesday

Dr. Andy's Poetry and Technology Hour, host Andy Jones, 5 pm, KDVS-90.3 FM. Info: www.culturelover.com.

Mahogany Urban Poetry Series, 9:00 pm, Sweet Finger Jamaican Restaurant, 1704 Broadway. Info: www.malikspeaks.com or 492-9336. \$5 cover.

#### 2 Thursday

Poetry Unplugged, TBA. Gilberto Rodriguez hosts. Open mic before/after. 8 pm, Luna's Café, 1414 16th St. Info: 441-3931 or www. lunascafe.com. Free.

#### 5 Friday

Sacramento Locks Festival - In Celebration of Our Natural Hair - 1631 K Street in the Sacramento Ballet Building, 7-11 pm. Festival Kick-Off Reception and Reggae Dance Party with food, music and fun for the whole family. \$5 adults, children under 12 free.

#### 4 Saturday

Sacramento Locks Festival, 10 am-6 pm, will feature hair presentations and demonstrations, vendors, food, music, poetry, information galore and much more. 1631 K Street in the Sacramento Ballet Building. \$10 adults, children under 12 free.

First Saturday Series. TBA. Noah Hayes hosts, 8pm Theatre on the Boulevard, 1901 Del Paso Blvd. Open mic after. Info: Supanova09@hotmail.com or Sac\_Town\_Poetry@hotmail.com . \$5donation

Escritores del Nuevo Sol's writing workshop and potluck on 1st Saturdays. 11am, second floor at La Raza Galeria Posada, 15th & R. Info: Graciela Ramirez, 456-5323 or joannpen@comcast.net.

## 5 Sunday

Poemspirits. On hiaturs until October. Info: 481-3312.

#### 6 Monday

Labor Day Holiday, no SPC reading.

BookTown, a bi-weekly radio show spotlighting the literary scene, co-hosted by Molly Fisk and Eric Tomb, 1-2 pm, KVMR 89.5 FM.

## poetry NOW | 4

#### 7 Tuesday

SPC Poetry Workshop, 7:30 pm, Hart Senior Center, 916 27th St. (27th & J). Info: Danyen, 530-756-6228. Workshop news: www.sacramentopoetrycenter.org, SPC Workshop News. Free.

Terry Moore's Access Television Show, 1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 9 pm, Channel 17 (depending on cable provider). Co-hosted by Regina High. (Sacramento viewing only.)

#### 8 Wednesday

Rattlesnake Review Series: Patricia Wellingham-Jones reads from her chapbook, Voices on the Land. host: Kathy Kieth, 7:30-9 pm at Book Collector, 1008 24th St. Free. Read-around follows.

Dr. Andy's Poetry and Technology Hour, host Andy Jones, 5 pm, KDVS-90.3 FM. Info: culturelover.com.

Mahogany Urban Poetry Series, 9:00 pm, Sweet Finger Jamaican Restaurant, 1704 Broadway. Info: www.malikspeaks.com or 492-9336. \$5 cover.

#### 9 Thursday

Poetry Unplugged, TBA. Barbara Noble hosts. Open mic before/after. 8 pm at Luna's Café, 1414 16th St. Info: 441-3931 or www.lunascafe.com. Free.

## 11 Saturday

Poems-For-All, TBA, hosted by Richard Hansen, 7:30 pm, The Book Collector, 1008 24th Street. Refreshments. free mini-books. Info: Richard, 442-9295.

## 12 Sunday

Stockton Poet's Corner. Monika Rose reads. 7 pm, Barnes & Noble, Weberstown Mall, Stockton. Info: www.poetscornerpress.com or 209-951-7014.

#### 13 Monday

Sacramento Poetry Center presents John Amen, host: Bob Stanley. 7:30 pm, Sacramento Ballet, 1631 K St. Info: 441-7395 or www.sacramentopoetrycenter. org. Free

Sacramento Poetry Center Board Meeting, 6 pm, Hamburger Mary's (17th and K.) Info: spc@sacramentopoetrycenter.

org or 441-7395.

#### 14 Tuesday

SPC Poetry Workshop, 7:30 pm, Hart Senior Center, 916 27th St. Info: Danyen, 530-756-6228. Free.

#### 15 Wednesday

Dr. Andy's Poetry and Technology Hour, host Andy Jones, 5 pm, KDVS-90.3 FM. Info: culturelover.com.

Mahogany Urban Poetry Series, 9:00 pm, Sweet Finger Jamaican Restaurant, 1704 Broadway. Info: www.malikspeaks.com or 492-9336. \$5 cover.

## 16 Thursday

Poetry Unplugged, Michelle Tea and Rocco Kiyatos read. Frank Andrick hosts. Open mic before/after. 8 pm at Luna's Café, 1414 16th St. Info: 441-3931 or www.lunascafe.com. Free.

#### 17 Friday

Escritores del Nuevo Sol presents All Spanish/Espanol Reading. 7:30 pm, La Raza Galeria Posada, 15th & R. Info: Graciela Ramirez, 456-5323 or Joannpen@comcast.net.

Other Voices: presents Chris Fry 7:30, the Unitarian Church in Davis, 27074 Patwin Road, off Russell Blvd.. Open mic follows. Info: Allegra, 530-753-2634 or Betty, 530-753-1432.

#### 18 Saturday

Capital City Artists Collective's 3rd Saturday Workshop, poetry, live music, open-mic, 7-10 pm, 4320 Stockton Blvd.. Info: Terry Guilford, 457-0831 or Sha-Lo, 348-4005. Refreshments. \$5 cover, kids free.

Fairytale Town Book Celebration, 10 am – 4 pm. Land Park across from Funderland and the Zoo. Call 441-7395 to help at the Poetry Center's booth.

## 19 Sunday

Fairytale Town Book Celebration, 10 am - 4 pm. Land Park across from Funderland and the Zoo. Call 441-7395 to help at the Poetry Center's booth.

Third Sunday Writing Group 1:00-3:00 pm, various locations. Info: eskimopi@jps.net or nancy\_wallace@calpers.ca.gov.

# Calendar continued...

The Ruebi Freyja & Friends Reading Hour (for Kids of All Ages) 11am. The Book Collector, 1008 24th Street. Info: 442-9295 Ruebi reads; the kids read; fun for the whole family!

#### 20 Monday

The Sacramento Poetry Center Volunteer Recruitment Ice Cream Social and open mic, 7:30 pm, Sacramento Ballet, 1631 K St. Info: 441-7395 or www.sacramentopoetrycenter. org.

BookTown, a bi-weekly radio show spotlighting the literary scene, co-hosted by Molly Fisk and Eric Tomb, 1-2 pm, KVMR 89.5 FM.

#### 21 Tuesday

SPC Poetry Workshop, 7:30 pm, Hart Senior Center, 916 27th St. Info: Danyen, 530-756-6228. Free.

Third Tuesday Poetry Series Andrea Ross and Clara Hsu. Host: Kimberly White. Q&A follows reading. 7 pm at Arden-Dimick Library, 891 Watt (Watt & Northrup). Info: 264-2770. Free.

Terry Moore's Access Television Show, 1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 9 pm, Channel 17 (depending on cable provider). Co-hosted by Regina High. (Sacramento viewing only.)

#### 22 Wednesday

Dr. Andy's Poetry and Technology Hour, host Andy Jones, 5 pm, KDVS-90.3 FM. Info: culturelover.com.

Mahogany Urban Poetry Series, 9:00 pm, Sweet Finger Jamaican Restaurant, 1704 Broadway. Info: www.malikspeaks.com or 492-9336. \$5 cover.

#### 23 Thursday

Poetry Unplugged, TBA. Frank Andrick hosts. Open mic before/after. 8 pm at Luna's Café, 1414 16th St. Info: 441-3931 or www. lunascafe.com. Free.

#### 24 Friday

Poetry at the Art Foundry: Julia Connor, host, Luke Breit, 8 pm, Art Foundry Gallery, 1021 R. Street. Info: Luke, 446-POET. \$5 donation. No open mic.

#### 25 Saturday

The Guild Theater presents "The Show," features the Big Slam II, with cash prizes. 7-9 pm at the Guild on 2828 35th St. Tickets at Underground Books next to the Guild or fromtheheart1@hotmail.com. Info: Terry Moore, 455-POET.

## 27 Monday

The Sacramento Poetry Center: Amy Miller, Robert Hoppensteadt, and Amy MacLennan. Susan Bonta hosts. 7:30 pm, Sacramento Ballet, 1631 K St. Info: 441-7395 or www. sacramentopoetrycenter.org. Free.

#### 28 Tuesday

SPC Poetry Workshop, 7:30 pm, Hart Senior Center, 916 27th St. Info: Danyen, 530-756-6228. Free.

#### 29 Wednesday

Dr. Andy's Poetry and Technology Hour, host Andy Jones, 5 pm, KDVS-90.3 FM. Info: culturelover.com.

Mahogany Urban Poetry Series, 9:00 pm, Sweet Finger Jamaican Restaurant, 1704 Broadway. Info: www.malikspeaks.com or 492-9336. \$5 cover.

## 30 Thursday

Poetry Unplugged, TBA. Bri Pruett reads. Frank Andrick hosts. Open mic before/after. 8 pm at Luna's Café, 1414 16th St. Info: 441-3931 or www.lunascafe.com. Free.

The World of The Ten Thousand Things: Writing Inner Landscape Through Poetry of Place a UC Davis Extension course taught by Susan Kelly DeWitt. 8 meetings from Sept. 30-Dec. 2 (no meeting Nov. 11 or 25): Thurs., 6-9 p.m. Sacramento: Sutter Square Galleria, 2901 K St. (\$295). Enroll in section 042WRT123, by phone or on-line:(800) 752-0881 or (530) 757-8777 from Davis and Woodland www.extension.ucdavis.edu/arts .

This course is available to members of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) for those 55 and older at no charge with paid membership. For information about OLLI go to http:// universityextension.ucdavis.edu/olli/

## **Earth Songs**

Full moon, crooning, tells turtle to come out and dance on sandy-loam at the edge

of Putah Creek where sandy-loam learned from grass snake how to weave grass into melody,

where crawdads teach Putah Creek the art of cart-wheeling to laughing water lyrics

and deep beneath the creek deep beneath the sandy-loam water thrums a soft song

valley oaks and black walnuts hear when they touch the tule fog, when they sing of holding on and letting go.

Vulture hawks preening in morning light teach amaryllis the glory of opening

while old fox, wary of hunters, carries Grandmother to her new moon.

Allegra Jostad Silberstein

## LIST YOUR EVENT:

To have an event posted on the SPC Literary Calendar, please call Jody Ansell at: (916) 739-0768 or email us at: calendar@sacramentopoetrycenter.org by the 5th of the month preceding your event. Thank you.

#### Postcolonial Children's Lit.

You may have noticed how children when faced with another screaming child will pause take their fingers out of their mouth and begin to listen like dolphins for some code, wondering if they will hear the right order of noise that is their cue to join in?

Their faces fill with concern for this dialect we no longer understand and then they will give you that pitted look as if they know you could not understand, as if they know you have been colonized by the alphabet, by Dick and Jane and Spot running.

Or is it simply shame and not concern that once again someone has fallen prey to the threat of, "When your father gets home" or given in taking the cookie as a bribe never to speak in their native tongue again?

-David Moody

## **Drawing Attention**

For Elizabeth

Sitting against the wall in a night class, drawing in the margin of your notes, you draw the girl across form you noticing that the cursive of your sentences that have run into the margin make the perfect head of hair. Noticing that if you flip through your spiral notebook she will in the turning pages become animated and turn to look over her shoulder at you, her lips still damp with ink, her hair whispering something like "Remember this" or "Midterm".

And tonight's sun is going down casting shadows through mini blinds striping the floor like lines on notebook pages. Pages that you enter now as a sketch wondering how you are going to fill the empty bubble over your head where the words go, wondering what will become of you now that you can be erased.

Will this be the final frame or will it end sipping coffee in some diner or in a dim movie theater, or better still in the light of her porch tracing her hair behind her ear its crescent form rising like the moon into a dark sky of hair, hair that is tangled in asterisks, asterisks that have become the stars of this night, meant to draw attention to something, or to signify its importance?

-David Moody

#### **Tread**

Today I make the right turn at the red light, pull in to the garage where you say your husband works and have even recommended form time to time.

But I have never gone, not wanting to believe that the parts of you that are with me, shy and occasional, peering out from the drawn curtains of a blouse, could be bold.

After examining my tires he says that I need four new ones and explains the ware and tear that I have caused. And somehow he knows, knows the way I take to work, knows about the pothole on Main. The one that caused the coffee stain that you, standing in my office gripping in one hand the ends of my shirt and with the other dabbing my chest with a damp tissue, assure me will come out with a spot of bleach.

He says, that I make more left turns than rights and that I break to late, then wipes his greased palm on his Levi's to hand me an estimate. And in his callused hands I can see the way he takes with you, how you turn in your sleep.

Shaking his hand, I trace the indentation of your hips carved there by the irritations of elastic waistbands.

-David Moody

#### **Hot Flashes**

Not pain but a blushing, a deep engine chugging in the delicate body, smoldering out through the skin, an internal sauna so tiny that drops pop through and gloss the face, the throat, the soft, hidden sides under the dress sodden with slippery wet sliding down—the hot hair lifted, drenched, from the neck.

Rude hormones, like bad tenants, are having yet another good-bye party before they move away forever, stealing the silver candlesticks from my hope chest and the poster of Ho Chi Minh.

Every night they wake me from my deep sleep, my dreams of the river flowing backwards up the mountain away from the greedy sea—to a crashing on the stairs, drunken shouts, stupid hilarity around the bonfire on the lawn where the old furnishings, the beautiful things my parents gave me when I first moved in, piece by piece, night after night, go up in flames.

-Gail Rudd Entrekin

#### **ONLY THE VOICE REMAINS**

-on hearing Terry Tempest Williams speak on peace-

her voice is honey and wine; her hands move the air like small-beaked birds; in her mouth, the word red becomes lava poured over raw Utah desert.

once we shared paper cups filled with water and cheap white bread passed hand-to-hand, child to adult—in remembrance of Jesus, our bodies immersed in warm water, our hair floating on its surface.

her words tumble still; sentences hang midair while the audience waits—our puritanical past, she says, makes us hold back; we do not respect our passions. We could learn from the Tuscans—how to eat and sing off-key, how to love—how to sit together at the table of peace.

-Colette Jonopulos

## Communiqué

Just one wrist flick of a letter opener, wicked sharp, to slice through the envelope flap, Shucking the papers clean,

she smoothes the sheaf, trues the crease and laps up words right down to the dots and crosses. So begins

the translation, from salutation to close. She is a code breaker, looking to twist and skew each bit of news

to find a declaration, perhaps an invitation. But the letter des not yield. No message emerges

to give her what she wants. She touches the ink bleeding her name, folds the sheets, surrenders.

-Amy MacLennan

The Poet Tree, Inc. poetry NOW | 7

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# Still Life with Cheese and a Flower

come from?" I'll savor the memory her question will bring. I will not answer, and then after a while, I will.

artistry then eats it with an apple. When she opens the envelope she'll say, "Where did these

who slices cheese with such

The block of cheddar looks good, one orange slice curling away on my wife's plate,

so does the rose in the bud vase, the flower opening wide, petals still smooth, creamy white with rouge tinged edges. Perhaps I'll dry them, put some in an envelope—this will take some time—then drop them in the mail and send them to the same woman

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-Larry Starzec