

# The House of Poetry

## Poetry Reading Session Volume XXIX 2017

### **A selection from “A Ph.D.’s Reverie, Imagined for Professor Francis G. Guittard”**

Yet before the apparition could respond,  
The Tower Clock began chiming Westminster,  
Then gonged ten times, startling Frank awake,  
The figure in his dream a memory indelible.

He slowly packed his notebooks, pens, and ink in his case  
And walked to the rooming house where he slept.  
The concerns of his day were now far away,  
In their place a strange peacefulness.

- Charles F. Guittard

**House of Poetry Program**

**Wednesday, March 15, 2017**

**On the campus of Baylor University, Waco, Texas**

**All events are in the Armstrong-Browning Library**

**(Follow the link for directions; enter at the portico of the Cox Entrance Foyer off James Street)**

**8:45 a.m. Registration and Coffee Reception—*Cox Reception Hall*)**

**SESSION ONE: Cox Lecture Hall**

**9:15 a.m. Welcome:** Department of English, Baylor University

**9:30-10:30 Readings from "The House of Poetry" Volume XXIX**

**10:30-11:00 Break—*Cox Reception Hall***

**11:00-12:00 Guest Presenter: Diane Glancy, Following the Trail Poetry Asks Us to Follow**

**Noon-1:00 p.m.: Annual Luncheon—*Cox Reception Hall***

**SESSION TWO: Cox Lecture Hall**

**1:00-2:00 Guest Presenter: Bruce Bond, Poetry and the Music of What Matters**

**2:00-3:00 More Readings from "The House of Poetry" Volume XXIX, Closing Remarks**

**Diane Glancy** is professor emerita at Macalester College. Her latest poetry books are "Report to the Department of the Interior," University of New Mexico Press, 2015, which won the 2016 Willa Award from Women Writers of the West, "The Collector of Bodies, Concern for Syria and the Middle East," Wipf & Stock, 2016, and "The Keyboard Letters QWERTYUIOPASDFGHJKLZXCVBNM," which won the 2016 Catherine Case Lubbe Award from the Poetry Society of Texas. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/diane-glancy>)

**Bruce Bond** is the author of seventeen books including, most recently, *Immanent Distance: Poetry and the Metaphysics of the Near at Hand* (U of MI, 2015), *For the Lost Cathedral* (LSU, 2015), *The Other Sky* (Etruscan, 2015), *Black Anthem* (Tampa Review Prize, U of Tampa, 2016), and *Gold Bee* (Crab Orchard Award, Southern Illinois University Press, 2016). Four of his books are forthcoming: *Blackout Starlight: New and Selected Poems 1997-2015* (E. Phillabaum Award, LSU), *Sacrum* (Four Way Books), *Rise and Fall of the Lesser Sun Gods* (Elixir Book Prize, Elixir Press), and *Dear Reader* (Free Verse Editions). Presently he is Regents Professor at University of North Texas. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/bruce-bond>

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**Linda Banks****Beyond Eden**

On the 8<sup>th</sup> day man began  
to search for worlds outside his own.  
Beyond the garden he could see  
where land and sky encircled him.  
Toward that horizon he would face  
in all directions, wondering...

With sun and stars to guide his way,  
he marked a path across the land  
until he stood on sandy shore  
where sea and sky rolled endlessly  
in restless rhythm of his heart  
once again, wondering...

When man had charted land and seas,  
he lay beneath the canopy of sky  
that always covered where he was,  
and saw his world surrounded by the view.  
Beyond the moon and stars, the sun, the known,  
he gazed, wondering...

**Linda Banks****Moon Watcher**

In 1969, while astronauts walked on the moon,  
my toddler took his first faltering steps.  
My son has fallen several times since then,  
and so have I.

When Neil Armstrong spoke those memorable words,  
*one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind*,  
my son was learning to talk. And I was learning  
how easy it is to listen, but not to hear—to hear,  
but not understand.

Looking up at a recent full moon, I thought  
of Armstrong, so recently gone from this earth,  
and how he shunned the spotlight. But I wondered  
if he ever wished he could go back and do it all again.

If I could go back, I would be wiser and stronger,  
knowing there is a grace that holds us up,  
helps us take one small step after another,  
that keeps us grounded wherever we are.

Previously published in *Inkwell Echoes*, 2014



Christine H. Boldt

**A Stitched-Together Life**

Prairie wife sits sewing, alone, on the sill.

Her *soddie* is scourged by a merciless wind.

There is naught but chaff in the granary bin.

Her man's gone to town and her children are ill

with a sickness that's left them sallow, and still.

She regards her stained fingers, their broken skin.

Prairie wife sits sewing, alone, on the sill,

Her *soddie* is scourged by a merciless wind.

But piecing a cover, she's caught in the thrill

of turkey-red scraps against black, daffodil.

Her back becomes straighter; she lifts up her chin.

Folks may have it drab, but that don't break their will.

Prairie wife sits sewing, resolved, on the sill.

Previously published in *Encore*, 2016

Christine H. Boldt

**Bacchus in Texas**

Bacchus, a *terracotta* mask,  
grimaces, gape-mouthed  
on the garden wall.  
He's an expatriate under our live oaks,  
although the sun sets as outrageously here  
as it did behind the black cypresses  
and the raw ocher oven  
where he was once fired.

Moss has worked its way into his frown,  
has given a cast to one of his eyes  
and split the curl of his lip.  
The children watch him warily,  
especially when one girl is brave enough  
to tease the daddy-long-legs  
quartered in his throat.  
Then, their pulsing communion disturbed,  
The critters whisker down his chin.

Bacchus and I rarely converse now  
about the old days,  
but, at the Feast of the Assumption,  
*Ferragosto*, we usually remember  
how the heat of a Roman summer  
would explode the cones of the umbrella pines,  
graveling a dusty piazza with *pignoli*.  
And, last year, when a spider webbed  
a monocle over his bad eye,  
I took his picture.

Previously published in *Texas Poetry Calendar*, 2011

**Christine H. Boldt****Medusozoa**

I floated, bubbled,  
'mid coral rubble.  
I turned and viewed, afar,  
relaxed, suspended,  
tentacles extended,  
the sea-ward kin of a star.  
With beauty, danger,  
in equal measure,  
its dangling jewels were set.  
By Circe's daughter!  
In Aegean waters,  
was it good or evil I'd met?  
The fiery colors of a daring heart,  
or the burning eye of the sun?  
Transfixed, I delayed,  
then I swam away,  
but it had already stung.



*May the great name of the Holy One be praised to all eternity.*

In the nursing home, my father's face became  
a pharaoh's face, tight skin over high bones,  
eye sockets deep like cups.

"Are you my daughter?"

In one of mine, I could take his whole hand  
that used to seem so broad.

For the dead, for the war dead, he sang:

*O Holy Spirit, who did brood  
upon the chaos wild and rude ...*

*O Hear us when we cry to Thee  
for those in peril on the sea.*

Into black water--the ship steadying on the black water—  
bodies slid, one by one, souls commended to the deep,  
men he commanded and lost.

fifty-nine

sixty

sixty-one

*Hallowed and honored,  
extolled and exalted,  
adored and acclaimed  
be the great name of our God,  
though He is above the praises, hymns,  
and songs of adoration men can utter.*

As a Gentile, I do not lay on phylacteries.  
Yet my body wears reminders of my earthly father—  
the whorl of hair at my nape, the leaning of my teeth,  
and I have torn the garments over my heart.

I will not mend the rip though my father's shroud  
turns spider web thin. I say Kaddish for him,  
I say it over and over

eighty-six

eighty-seven

for him, for myself. For us all.

*May He who ordains harmony in the universe  
grant abundant peace and life to us ...*

one hundred

*Let us say Amen.*

**Susan Maxwell Campbell**

**February 14**

I used to know the stories of saints—the nuns had their favorites,  
but all I now recall is Nicholas and the gold coins he tossed  
through the orphans' window and how they landed  
in stockings left to dry on the backs of peeling wooden chairs.  
The charity of saints—the purest of loves beaten now  
like brass by Hallmark and Lady Godiva and FTD—  
but never mind! Commerce organizes life—love sweetens it.  
But what I want to talk about is Valentine.  
A man before a saint, he must have known  
the paperweight chains forged in lust—how the skin  
tastes sweet and hair tickles, kisses, teases.  
Certainly his body moved over hers  
(nothing rushed, all parts praised)—under hers, rhythms  
turning fiercer, faster and sighs growing to cries  
as they rushed out of themselves into one glowing  
sphere that seemed to hover while their breath was gone, after.  
And there has to have been a moment—maybe  
while he was buying a fish for supper, having judged  
its clear eye that looked back at him, or pruning  
last year's vines, cutting back to sturdy horizontals, gathering  
trimmings for the fire—one moment when his heart knew

how much the body was only the envelope  
for the world, for the letter his life was writing  
to her, telling her the rose bush was leafing out  
its tiny green gestures among the worst thorns,  
telling her he'd bring the book he had described  
as they lay yesterday in the late sun spilling  
across the floor, the bed, her naked back, his face ....  
telling her how on a solitary night bursting with flowers  
he had learned God's sacred name, telling her  
he had seen the sin-black and hope-white of humankind.  
But that moment—as he held out copper coins  
to the fisherman's wife or grasped the vine to lean on  
as he stood up—that moment was the pivot that made  
all the difference, a promise remaining fresh in his memory,  
to fuel his loving imagination even now  
living into sainthood as he ages and diminishes in body,  
an old man now who prays continually in his singular cell  
and thanks his God every day  
for her love, for his love, for His love.

**Paul Chaplo****Big Diamond Ring**

There's a little chapel on a hill  
Down by the Rio Grande  
We'll need some flower girls  
And a couple of wedding bands

You better call your Ma  
Get someone from church to sing  
Tell your Ma to that a seat  
You got a big ol' diamond ring

I'll meet you in the front  
Where we'll stand hand in hand  
Look into you pretty eyes  
Slip on your wedding band

For the honeymoon  
We won't have to go far  
'Got a cabin in the hills  
And we can get there in my truck

There will be gentle rain  
And wildflowers in the sands  
Children splashing in puddles  
As we kiss

And in the church yard  
The saints will dance  
In the desert the stone-covered bones  
Will drink and laugh again

As you sleep in my arms  
Under the moon and stars.



**Paul Chaplo****Indiana**

*In Memory of Capt. Bruce Beck d.1949*

Bruce isn't coming home  
And she's dropping to her knees  
And Bessie's playing with weeds  
She'll never be the same  
Poor baby

That's Indiana in the springtime  
That's Indiana in the rain

Woolworth flowers in the shade  
And she's dropping to her muddy knees  
And she can't believe he's there  
Beneath her as she prays

That's Indiana  
Let it rain

Running for the barn in a downpour  
Kicking back on round bales  
Thinking about you  
The man I never knew

In the rain in Indiana  
I can almost see you standing there

Ray's grandfather eyes smiling  
As he buys me a .22  
The grandson he never had  
As he brags to the neighbors  
Just the way grandfathers do

That's Indiana in the sunshine

Oh, that warm Indiana sun on my face  
As I played in those fields and streams  
That's Indiana in the springtime  
That's just the way it was.

**Paul Chaplo****When I Meet You**

When I meet you  
I'll be smiling at you  
I'll be wondering  
"What planet are you from?"

So show me  
Show me that you like me  
Want to get to know me  
Show me with your smile  
  
It's gonna take a little while

You might seem a little strange  
On a bike with a basket or a bell  
But what the hell  
Take a look at me  
I'm writing this for you  
In my boxers drinking tea

I'll put streamers on your handlebars  
And then you'll see  
How we're meant to be

\*\*\*

You're not who I thought you'd be  
And boy am I relieved  
You're just the way you're supposed to be

And we've got love to share, how rare  
We've got life to share, how rare  
How rare.

## Lee Elsesser

### This Just In

Metropolis readers have lost  
a long-time friend.

Mild-mannered reporter Clark Kent  
resigned today from the Daily Planet,  
citing irreconcilable differences with  
the newspaper's management.

In a prepared statement, Kent said he was

- + shocked when Reporter Lois Lane  
slipped questions for a presidential  
debate to one of the candidates,
- + saddened when Photographer  
Jimmy Olsen admitted he only  
submitted unflattering photos  
of one candidate for publication,
- + dismayed when Editor Perry White  
published an editorial stating fair  
and unbiased reporting were  
no longer necessary at the paper.

Kent, who joined the staff of the city's largest  
daily in 1938, wrote in today's statement  
"When I came to the Daily Planet, we operated  
under a strong set of professional principles and  
ethical standards. Today, here, I find no sense  
of support for my core values of truth, justice  
and the American way."

Kent was not available for questions. An associate,  
Business Editor Lana Lang, said she thought he had  
flown out of the city to consider his future.

**Lee Elsesser**

**Adobe Walls**

I wish I could have seen

that adobe fortress in 1845, new  
mud-brick walls aglow, the panhandle sun  
setting on the Republic of Texas, or

the gunpowder blast in 1849, when  
the trader William Bent, who built the fort,  
blew it down, or

those ruins in 1864, when Colonel  
Kit Carson, ambushed and outnumbered  
sheltered his army among the broken bricks  
to organize a miracle retreat, or

what was left of the fallen walls  
in 1874, when a buffalo hunter, Billy Dixon,  
shouldered his Sharps rifle to fire the shot  
that won him a place in frontier history, but

adobe melts in time to mud,  
and dries to dust

and broken stems of prairie grass.

In the winds of West Texas,

only the stories stay.

## Patricia Ferguson

### Dawn: Grand Lake of the Cherokees, Spring Retreat

One chill spring morn, we slipped our bunks,  
 shaking other drowsy campers, tip-toed out,  
 hiking up a country road to an overlook,  
 a lover's leap, to watch the sun come up.  
 We were city kids, come to the woods  
 to find ourselves and God, amid the quiet to listen.  
 No lovers here.  
 Rustlings in the dry leaf-mould, eerie at midnight,  
 were friendly now,  
 some cuddly creature creeping to its nest.  
 Around the bend, a cloud tangled  
 in the bare-limbed trees.  
 (Some said it was a dogwood tree, but I knew better.)  
 We assembled on the bluff above a silver finger of the lake  
 in the lifting morning light, below us trees  
 o'erhung the water, fringing it with lace  
 as mourns the night,  
 Shivering, we tracked the dawn, hands tucked in our elbows..  
 Above -- a tiny edge of pink.  
 The mockingbirds, forgetting to imitate,  
 led a swelling chorus: the bird's aubade.  
 "This pink and pinker is getting boring," said one.  
 We laughed and shuffled our feet. No one left.  
 In an instant, a sliver of yellow,  
 so bright it hurt our eyes,  
 The birds were still. We joined in silence.  
 Majestic, swelling in the sky,  
 dividing the pink, driving up the lavender sky,  
 contours filling, rounding, brighter than gold,  
 edges lost in blazing light,  
 the sun cleared the horizon.  
 Across the lake, a tractor engine caught.  
 Out of our trance, we shook ourselves  
 The sun was up, and we remembered breakfast.  
 We skipped and leapfrogged back to camp,  
 and shouted -- vain attempt -- to fill the stillness.  
 The woods absorbed our noise.  
 I pressed it all like pink and purple flowers  
 in an ancient tome of mouse-eared leaves,  
 laid it in lavender, a memory for my cedar chest.

**Patricia Ferguson****My Father**

(A Haiku Sequence)

abandoned shack  
in plowed field  
his childhood home

he got a Ph.D.,  
he said, to never again  
chop cotton

the world is wider  
than a pasture, a field  
a harvest

out of the fields  
out of the foothills  
came genius

now we know  
what the weather will do  
less guess work

he respected them  
the workers in the fields  
a safer harvest

## Patricia Ferguson

### What Is Man...?

(Haiku Gloss on Psalm 8:4a, 8-9\*)

*the fowl of the air*  
glide through endless opal skies  
dive rough or calm seas

*and fish of the sea*  
school through living coral reefs  
ballet perfection

*and whatsoever*  
*passeth* the plankton and kelp  
that feed vast oceans

*through paths of the seas*  
swim magnificent mammals  
that name each other

*O LORD our Lord, how*  
awe inspiring is the sea  
power--sine waves--pound

*excellent thy name--*  
creation--mother of life--  
depth-- magnificence

*in all the earth* what  
is more insignificant  
than men on the sea

\*Psalm 8:

v. 4a. What is man, ...?

v. 8. The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.

v. 9. O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!

**Leila Fincher****Metamorphosis**

Downy hair, fluffy limbs  
feather lashes light on satin cheeks  
bundle of joy, promise of tears  
sleeping angel in my arms...

Awkward duck, knobbly knees  
too big feet run slapping down the hall  
bundle of laughs, promise of fun  
ALMOST outgrown mama hugs...

Sparkling wings, graceful curves  
ballet butterfly flits through my heart  
bundle of promise, joy of growth  
Spread your wings dear butterfly.



**Leila Fincher****There's No One Quite Like Mom**

Mother, Mommy, Mama, Mom  
Such insignificant words  
“It's not all that hard,” you say  
“to fill the shoes of Mom.”

Other hands can rock a cradle.  
Other voices sing them songs.  
Other mouths can teach them  
colors, letters, shapes, and more.

Abler hands can soothe an illness.  
More educated minds should teach.  
Mother really aren't equipped  
to rear their little ones.

Did you feel the first life flutter?  
Know him before he could be seen?  
Fret over her whisper-breathing?  
Spend yourself to give them life?

Mother hands are able hands.  
Tender Mommy voices teach.  
Bear-like, mamas guard their young.  
There's no one quite like Mom.

## Charles F. Guittard

### A Ph.D.'s Reverie, Imagined for Professor Francis G. Guittard

Stanford Commencement, June 1931,  
A reporter asked the robed figure,  
"Dr. Guittard, a moment please,  
Now that you have your Ph.D.,  
Do you intend to retire?"  
A grey-headed Frank faced the young man,  
His mind turning without thinking  
To the real beginning of his story  
Forty-five years earlier in rural Ohio,  
And the memory of a mother  
Who hated cold weather,  
That terrible storm May of 1886,  
But loved flowers and growing things...

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A brisk September in 1886,  
Following May's cruel storm,  
A year of hard times all around.  
From New Bedford, Ohio  
To Chester, Texas was the plan.  
Frank, nineteen and restless,  
Would scout land for a family move.  
Maybe Texas would be the place  
For his father to make a new stand,  
Buy a farm, restart a medical practice--  
Hopefully more coin of the realm this time,  
Less farmers' goods and produce.

He said his goodbyes with his mother--  
"God bless you Frank, we'll miss you,  
I'll be glad to learn you've done  
Something of note in Texas.  
Please be sure and write, won't you?  
We'll go by the post office every day."  
Those mother's last words so sincerely offered,  
All the same, were disturbing to Frank.  
He had thought the plan was to return home  
After reporting on climate, crops, and prices per acre,  
Apparent miscommunication between parents and son.  
Were they expecting him to remain in Texas regardless?  
It seemed so.  
Would he see his parents and family again?  
If so, when?  
He knew not.

His future would just have to play out in time,  
 Whether by Providence's inscrutable plan  
 Or by winds of chance tossing him who knows where.

He grabbed his heavy bag and heaved it onto the rig.  
 His father urged his best horse and buggy along the path.  
 They mostly kept their thoughts to themselves  
 As they passed neighbors' fields and barns,  
 Voicing only an occasional innocuous pleasantry.  
 At the station after their long ride, an awkward hand-shake  
 And final moment between father and son,  
 The urge to embrace suppressed,  
 Enough words said the night before,  
 Nothing more needed for memory's sake.

Now aboard the Pennsylvania Railroad,  
 Clickety clack, clickety clickety clack, clickety clack,  
 With a sack of sandwiches, a jug of apple cider,  
 A few dollars in his pocket, a train schedule,  
 A dime western or two, a Bible for instruction;  
 For mind's improvement several volumes  
 From his father's library—*A Pilgrim's Progress*,  
*Don Quixote*, Gibbon's *Decline and Fall, Volume One*—  
 There would be time to study on the train  
 During a three-day ride to barely charted land;  
 A clean shirt, a hat, all packed neatly away,  
 And a letter of introduction from his father,  
 In his father's painstaking hand,  
 Asking for kindly assistance for his son Frank  
 From any Christian he might meet on his way.

Frank hoped for a college degree, his life's central goal,  
 Someday, somewhere, somehow,  
 No help would be coming from home, however,  
 He knew he was out there on his own.  
 He felt a little like one of those storied orphans  
 Who were put on trains to distant States,  
 They might like their new families,  
 Or then they might not,  
 But never to see their poor mothers again.

Two years later he learned without warning  
 His mother had left this world, the cause uncertain.  
 He sobbed heartrendingly, grief and remorse welling up inside,  
 Never to see his mother again after leaving her that day.  
 Some things he should have said before he said goodbye  
 He blamed himself for, some words of appreciation  
 Never offered, perhaps an apology of some kind,  
 We'll never know what it was, for Frank never said.

Forty years afterward, in dimly-lit stacks in Palo Alto,  
 On one of those warm August nights shortly before ten,  
 After a long day's work making notes in his notebooks,  
 Scores of dusty volumes still piled high on the table,  
 An exhausted Frank struggled to stay awake,  
 His chin occasionally touching his chest, then snapping up.  
 Suddenly he thought he saw her face near him,  
 And desperately motioning her to stay  
 Lest the apparition disappear from view,  
 He released the feelings he had long wanted to say--  
 "I hope I've done something to please you, Mother,  
 Something which may be 'of note'..."

Yet before the apparition could respond,  
 The Tower Clock began chiming Westminster,  
 Then gonged ten times, startling Frank awake,  
 The figure in his dream a memory indelible.

He slowly packed his notebooks, pens, and ink in his case  
 And walked to the rooming house where he slept.  
 The concerns of his day were now far away,  
 In their place a strange peacefulness.

---

Frank gazed across the Quad  
 At Mrs. Stanford's Memorial Church,  
 Listening to the Tower Clock behind the church  
 Again complete its familiar chimes.  
 Frank looked down at the reporter,  
 Answering the lingering question  
 In his measured manner of speaking,  
 "No sir"---"Now I'm prepared  
 To go to work in earnest."  
 The reporter smiled at the new Ph.D.

The next day, for one last time,  
 He boarded the Southern Pacific for Texas,  
 Headed home to Josie, to Waco, and new students.  
 He would teach "in earnest" into his 84<sup>th</sup> year  
 As Baylor's oldest active faculty member.

**Katherine Hoerth****Mary Makes Breakfast**

He watches from below the countertop,  
stands on tippytoes so he can see  
the daily wonder born from her two hands  
as she empties flour in a bowl,  
tosses in a scattering of salt,  
a pinch of yeast, a squeeze golden honey.

He's never seen the dough rise but he knows  
it happens under darkness. How or why?  
His mother doesn't say but keeps her faith.

She hefts the silent loaf into her hands.  
He imagines it's alive like muscles  
growing in his legs. As Mary kneads,  
he listens to the rhythmic pulse of hands  
on dough on tile. She hums a tune, the same  
one that she hummed with hands on belly years  
ago. He feels it in his bones, the warmth,  
the blood, the everything she is  
she's given willingly. She shakes the flour  
from her hands and wipes them on her apron.  
A cloud of white surrounds her like a halo.

She slides the pan of dough into the oven.  
He watches through the glass and waits  
until the scent of fresh baked bread engulfs  
the kitchen. Mary pats his head. She trusts  
that one day he will come to understand  
a miracle is made of love and labor.

**Katherine Hoerth****Vigil for Persephone**

What else is there left to do but lie  
together, hand in hand, before the solstice?  
My mother and I watch the ceiling fan  
spin in endless motion as we savor  
the fullness of our bellies and the taste  
of Abuelita, cinnamon and pan  
dulce lingering still on the tongue.

I've practiced my acceptance – packed away  
sundresses, floppy gardening hats and chancas.  
I've let my hair grow long, the way he likes,  
stopped polishing my nails a daisy color.  
I've learned to love the fruits of winter, too –  
calabaza in my empanadas,  
grapefruit in the morning with some coffee,  
tunas sliced thin, devoured seeds and all.

But my mother's different – she's a mom –  
puts the heater on full blast and shuts  
her eyes. She tells herself it's always June,  
that our time together is eternal  
like her love. I know that once I'm gone,  
she'll keep my bedroom as I've left it, rise  
every morning, warm tortillas for two,  
set the breakfast table and eat alone,  
watch out the window for a trace of me.

Winter will take me with the coming sunrise –  
my hand will slip from hers. I taste the bitter  
sweetness of pomegranates on my tongue.

**Sandi Horton****Enter Our Soles**

Northern neighbors slush through snow  
In Texas we crunch through leaves  
With the rhythm of our shoes  
Six inches deep on a winter day

The sun shines brightly  
As we expose our toes  
Warmth radiates through the  
Tops of our bare feet

The earth is cool and damp  
On the bottoms of naked feet  
Sitting quietly we feel vibrations  
Enter the soles of our feet

Connecting with Gaia  
On the balance beam of life  
Creating stability and sensitivity  
All thoughts on the present moment

To keep our footing, not to slip  
Aligning energy fields  
Below the surface  
Mingling with tree roots

In the playground  
Swimming deeply  
With the trees in the breeze  
As above, so below

**Sandi Horton****Marked**

The teen-age boy with a mark on his neck  
The teen-age girl with a dancing pony tail  
Communicating intently with their eyes  
A crowd watching every move

Light streams through stained glass  
Reflecting bold colors  
The masterful violinists  
Illuminate the room with more light

Notes flow from their bows  
As the players and instruments  
Grow comfortable together  
The teen-agers naturally become one

Streams of light and music mingle  
Creating a sense of weightlessness  
In a dreamlike world  
To those willing to float away

A girl plays games on her phone  
She's missing out  
On the flying experience  
Of the motionless ones

Time is suspended  
Breathing slows  
A vapor embraces the room  
Until all are marked

*This poem was written after attending a string quartet performance in the Treasure Room of the Armstrong Browning Library, Spring 2016.*



**Sandi Horton****Swinging Bench**

Every day I walked by  
the wooden swinging bench  
so peaceful and inviting  
in the shade of an old oak tree

I never stopped  
to enjoy the breeze  
the surrounding gardens  
to sit quietly

Now it's 25 years later  
my children have left home  
almost time to retire  
time to swing under the tree

so much has changed  
as I glide  
forward  
and back

*This swinging bench is located near Draper Academic Building at Baylor University.  
Previously published in Langdon Review of the Arts in Texas, Sept. 2016*

**Christine Irving****A Lovers' Homily**

There is no love without accompanying death  
for green weeds flourish in love's fertile field.  
Love needs her scythe to cut a place for breath  
a sacred circle unconcerned with yield;  
needs clip off withered roses, dear and dead  
stop them dispatching sweet romantic scent  
to waft around the present love's sweet bed  
replacing lustful joy with sad lament;  
must cut back sheltering branches of the oak  
whose shade my reach too far across a lawn  
and blight the bud with shadow's heavy stroke  
that might have bloomed in colors of the dawn.  
If thou would love, set Lady Death a place  
at wedding's feast and ask her to say grace.

**Christine Irving****Battle Crow**

Badb comes cawling  
wearing guise of crow,  
forewarning doom,  
foreseeing verdant fields  
churned muddy with men's blood;  
arm, leg, head, hand and tender crops  
trampled underfoot, severed limbs  
hacked by axe and sword.  
Shillelaghs batter bone,  
burst kidneys, shatter spleen.  
She screeches frustration,  
screams rage into the wind,  
man, once again, destroying in short hour  
what woman took a lifetime to raise up.

**Christine Irving****Walking the Valley of the Shadow After Your Father's Death**

Death lurks behind your shoulder.  
Father tumbles to its scythe  
leaving you exposed, vulnerable  
trembling on a tightrope ring;  
a situation not uncommon to old men  
who have forgotten to enjoy  
life's accumulated wisdom.

Your purpose now -  
to make a sacred marriage;  
Hieros Gamos  
melding yin and yang.

Drink the peach's sweet elixir!

Sagacity, perception, knowledge  
acumen and sense comprise its honey.

Inquiry engenders understanding,  
understanding engenders forgiveness.

Know yourself to know the God  
your ego fears to meet.

Compassion outlasts death  
forever.

**Catherine L'Herisson****Touring the Gardens**

Daffodils and tulips nod in their beds,  
while pink flowering quince  
and forsythia, bright as sunshine,  
bloom beneath redbuds and dogwoods.

I stop to rest on a bench, admire azaleas  
in numerous hues in the distance.  
Baby leaves on native pecan trees  
seem to grow as I watch  
in the early morning mist.

It is later, when I go around a bend,  
spy the six-foot, red tip photinia bush,  
damp leaves all aflame in bright sun,  
that I, like Moses,  
feel like I am on holy ground,  
expect to hear a voice commanding me  
to remove my shoes.

**Catherine L'Herisson**

**An R-Rated Poem**

(suitable except for nudity)

At the new gynecologist's

on my very first trip,

I was only given a handkerchief size

cover-up after I was asked to strip.

In a quandary about what to do--

not big enough to cover any one place,

in panic as the doorknob turned,

I covered up my face!

**Catherine L'Herisson**

**Even at the Sink**

Green strawberry caps  
float like small lily pads  
on top of the dirty water  
in the dishpan.

Several berries,  
overripe, crushed,  
bleed in the cold white  
porcelain sink.

Oh, how like my heart,  
those bruised berries!  
With poignant pain,  
I think of you.  
Still...the sweet fragrance  
of strawberries remains.

**Budd Powell Mahan****Love, Valor, Compassion****Terrence McNally**

If a single subtext lies  
in his words,  
it is *connection*,  
the sought and sanctified need  
that propels souls on.  
The stage lights with his text,  
yearns its way to the proscenium,  
steams into the theatre to mist waiting eyes.  
He inhabits, speaks through characters,  
scratched façades reaching to reconcile.  
And as the stage lights dim,  
the heart will leap,  
rising to the moment in a scene,  
a soaring sense of understanding  
pulling toward a final curtain.



**Budd Powell Mahan****The Sister Poems**

And in that last moment,  
moving toward her stillness,  
it all released.

I was broken,  
unable to contain  
what burst and spilled,  
great sobbing loss  
buckling progress.

That is all  
there is of that day.

I wish I could remember  
letting her go,  
wish she knew how  
poems summon her  
to eyes' edge,  
her lips shaping words  
I am never  
able to hear.

**Patrick Lee Marshall****Castle Fantasies**

Wading through photos of my existence,  
I hold one up, examine the scene,  
recalling Heidelberg, the quaint town and  
magnificent castle a short walk away.  
Not a fairy castle, not a monument to ego;  
a town . . . built within protecting walls—  
grand in scale, resplendent in aging decay.  
I captured her eyes briefly meeting mine  
as I prepared to photograph a memory of her.  
The statue studded wall at her back unaware  
of the beauty she added to the ages there.

Examining the picture after all these years I see  
someone new at the edge of our photograph,  
a young man with a zoom lens—focused  
pulling closer a desired view.  
A smile broadens my face, trying  
to step into his thoughts, knowing he's not  
focused on the massive castle, but rather  
the ravishing woman that is my wife.  
I wonder what his fantasy was that day?  
I wonder if she was even aware  
the young stranger took a memory  
of her with him.

**Patrick Lee Marshall****Drifting**

Near sand dune  
patterned beaches,  
billowing clouds,  
tides and time, paint  
different shifting scenes,  
speak of new dreams.

I recline in wet sand  
at water's edge, wait.  
Waves wash over me  
lift me from the shore  
pull me into its embrace  
where deep water currents  
carry me to uncharted and  
unexpected new adventures.

My feet can take me places  
I know and want to go.  
When the pen takes over,  
Subjects do not matter.  
It's all about the show.

**Patrick Lee Marshall**

**This is Not About the Brazos River**

It's not about the time we went to where the Brazos  
 flowed into the Gulf, taking bacon to catch crabs.  
 It's not about family reunions at Cameron Park in Waco,  
 where the Bosque river joins the Brazos,  
 or times at Baylor's Ruth Hall; Cameron Park  
 providing different and deeper emotions.  
 It's not about skinny dipping in the Clear Fork  
 of that waterway, or finding fossils along the Paluxy,  
 before it dumped treasures into the Brazos.  
 It's not about the time when we skipped school  
 to ski silver-smooth water on Possum Kingdom,  
 Nor is it pertaining to families and fishing trips  
 on that river, at the last turn before murky water  
 twisting through Palo Pinto hills and canyons  
 settle into clear coves in Possum Kingdom Lake.  
 It's not about when I was six and Dad allowed  
 me to go on an early morning trot line run.  
 That time Dad at the bow of the boat,  
 tore the trot line free of a snag  
 that ended up being a four-foot Alligator Gar,  
 jerking it into the boat, as a water moccasin  
 fell from an overhanging branch to join the fish,  
 while we moved quicker than ever to abandoned ship,  
 later laughing about what was not funny at the time.  
 No . . . This is about intersections in life,  
 roles they play and memories they make.  
 This is about returning to Waco where I attend  
 the Baylor House of Poetry to read and listen to tall tales  
 about the people, flora, fauna, places, and incidents  
 that might occur where the eleventh longest river in the U.S.  
 holds sway over so many lives.

**Janet McCann****Life List**

My friend the scholar-birdwatcher  
is dying, after a quiet regular life  
of Milton and birds, and if I could

imagine him a farewell, it would be this:  
to look out into the small yard  
he tended for forty years, to where

he placed the bird houses, the martin  
house and the hummingbird feeder,  
just in time to see a sweep of air

curve in and take form, the great arctic gyrfalcon  
not on his life list, there on the sill,  
beak, feathers and pinions

and final knowledge, Adam's homecoming  
after the story's end, better than Eden.  
May he leave in his hand a feather, that his wife  
might know where he has gone.

**Janet McCann****Forbidden Images**

over her shoulder Lot's wife just glanced back  
at the home she was leaving, wanting to glimpse  
for one last time the field, the goats, dogs, hens,  
her old father waving at the gate.  
but she turned into grief itself, a statue of grief,  
a columned tear. and then  
Eurydice, who herself did no wrong  
but Orpheus could not wait for her to form  
herself in the world, and looked, and so lost her,  
her slender weeping ghost melting away  
into the underworld. and still  
others: Diana in her bath,  
the bronzed young hunter  
seeing her, stunned, fascinated,  
then turned into a stag, hunted down  
by his own dogs. and then you. if you knew  
a face wreathed with snakes would calcify you,  
but you knew it would hold perfect, consuming beauty,  
each of your cells bursting as it turned  
into the purest light: would you  
not look?

**Janet McCann**

**If There Were No Other Listener**

Except myself and the dogs, would I write  
Poems for them?

Rhythmic yips and a growl,  
Refrain of woofs,  
Their names repeated twice,  
A high yowl sliding down a rail  
To a quavering whine.

And they do like some arrangements  
Better than others, they go from fast to slow.  
Lots of range in the howl,  
And the yaps, staccato, snappy as orders,

Until I can't continue their poem  
Because they are standing on my chest  
Licking my face, adding impromptu yelps.

Of course I would write for them,  
Would take their critique seriously,  
Would collaborate with them on a dog poetics  
Which would change of course with every passing litter.

Poems about the chase, about the snap  
Of jaws, about doggy humping and birthing,  
No poems of death or poems of writing.

A lot might be made of such a poetics  
If no one were listening, only me and the dogs.

Previously published in *The Bark*, Feb. 2017

**Masood Parvaze****Detroit summer of 1974**

Below the dull green tightly shut windows, with rain on dirt streaks; lives a city  
With screaming fire trucks  
Police cars and ambulances  
Inside the building . . . doors slam  
Hallways . . . drenched with . . . smoke  
Beer spills . . . and Profanity  
Steps . . . leading to the front door  
Occupied with tenants leaning in odd angles  
Drinking from brown bags  
Smoking and talking in inner city English  
On the street . . . pimps walking up and down . . . guarding their business  
Skinny guys with restless looks  
Slick back hair with Afro sheen glow  
Older men, with Luis Armstrong scratch  
Eyes glued to floor  
Wallets; chained to empty pockets  
Styrofoam boxes . . . fly with left over French fries  
This piece of promised heaven . . . for an immigrant  
Was . . . all mine



**Masood Parvaze****Poem Unborn**

In my head

I always carry

A poem

Unwritten

I

Feed it

With memories

Fantasies

Dreams . . . and

. . . nightmares

Hoping

It will be born

One day

Grow up

And

Make me

Proud

**Masood Parvaze****War Stories**

Old soldiers . . . get together

And tell Stories

Big and small lies

about the wars

There were friendships, selfless sacrifices

True heroics . . . honest . . . and admirable

But they never talk about

Killing boys when they were boys

Men piled up on the roadside

Like cut logs

Smoke filled with smell of burning tarps

. . . human blood, and gunpowder

Just the rescues and walking through hell

They never talk

about the tears shed at night

The urge to prove; what they were and weren't

Deep down . . . they all know

There has never been

A good war

Or a noble war

**Jessica Ray****Resurrection**

Fleeing from the tyranny  
the slavery of the despised Dakota tobacco field  
Hank landed in a small west Texas town  
by way of Mexico  
striking it rich along the way  
mining gold

But somewhere in search for his fortune  
Hank lost his sight  
He was going blind  
Hank had come to the end  
His journey was over he thought  
Until....  
Someone restored his sight

You would have thought all hell broke loose  
Racing his bicycle along the dusty streets  
of the town he called home  
his long white beard flowing from his  
wrinkled Methuselah face  
With a smile of glee, Hank shouted  
“I can see - it’s a miracle  
Doc gave me a miracle!  
I can see!”

**Jessica Ray**

**Disconnection.....**

**Unrelated?**

3 birth certificates  
 an amaryllis with 62 seeds  
 a wedding waterfall  
 advise: "rise above it"  
 from Texas to Montana  
 somewhere in San Antonio  
 summer camp

What is the link  
 connecting these seemingly  
 unrelated events and things

That is the question I'm searching for an answer to  
 waiting in a hospital rotunda  
 a gigantic circular four – tiered structure  
 found in the center of a West Texas City

Looking more than a hundred feet above  
 one's eyes are led to a round sky light  
 surrounded by an intensely black ceiling  
 as if to dispel the darkness inside  
 a darkness of illness struggling for life  
 Only the muted sound of voices in the distance  
 breaks the silence that late winter evening  
 until I hear the soft sound of Sandie's voice

Weeks ago she came to my bed side  
 a tiny wisp of a woman  
 Sandy locks of hair framed her gentle face  
 Her dark brown eyes conveyed words of compassion

Sandie came to bring healing....  
 healing of a different kind  
 It seemed that Sandie's approach to healing that day  
 was to reveal her own life of healing

It began at her birth in a Methodist Home in San Antonio  
 Her mother made a choice to keep her  
 In time Sandie came to own several birth certificates  
 Yet years later she came to choose her birth father's  
 name as her own

After years of searching  
she found her father  
in Montana

But in her youth Sandie found a father  
that never left her  
Introduced to him one summer at a Christian camp  
as a "father to the fatherless",  
Sandie knew at last she had found her true father

At that moment her life changed  
Sandie became a mother of four daughters  
with a husband a confidante  
who comforted her in days of discouragement  
with the words "Rise above it."  
Despite her remarkable accomplishment in  
music and ministry she needed comforting

Sandie's hands dance across the strings  
of her harp, " the voice of many waters"  
and echo in "A Wedding Waterfall"  
which she performs at weddings

And the amaryllis with the 62 seeds?  
(They were planted for more to bloom)  
It graces her sun room  
as a reminder of the beauty of nature  
and the ever present link in pursuit of mankind  
the invisible thread of life  
the loving presence of Spirit

## Jeannette L. Strother

### The Final Conversation

*In memoriam for Tina Marie*

She spoke, "I'm glad you came over today. Do you want some coffee?"

"Yea," I responded, "what have you been up to?"

"Nothing much, just being bored, come on let's sit on the porch."

I taunted, "You need to quit smoking."

"Yea, right and you need to quit eating." She was quick to reply.

Wow, your plants look good. Remember how Debbie used to keep those jars of stinking egg shell water to feed her plants.

Yep. The kids would run outside when she would get ready to use it. But her plants were always luscious and green. She offered, "Here take a little hooker in your coffee."

Not too much, I got to drive home.

Stay here tonight; we can talk.

And talk we did.

We talked about our *spring*,  
when as teenagers she and our sister Jerri would take Daddy's car  
and drive the twenty miles to Wheeling to stay with me. When I got  
off work I would have to drive them home to Cadiz and our brother  
Johnny would have to take me back to Wheeling.

We talked about our *summer*,  
when we would gather at either sister's, Debby or Laurie the house  
would be full with nieces and nephews and cousins and friends.  
Impromptu parties and card game that would last all night; football  
rivalries that divided the family into screaming sides about Daddy  
and how he called us Honey with a slant...and we laughed.

We talked about our *fall*,  
when our kids became parents making us grandparents. You, forever  
young, did not want to be called grandma, but loved being one.  
Your smile did not leave your face as you talked about all the babies  
who are growing to be beautiful young men and women.

We talked about our coming *winter*,  
as we Miss Clairol-ed the snow. We spoke in hushed whispers  
about the missing members of our family tree.

We hugged as we parted. You said, "I love you Babe, come back soon."

"I love you too," I answered.

One month later she headed for a different porch, where someday  
we will all sit together and talk.

**Jeannette L. Strother**

**Jingle Jangle Spirit**

*In memoriam for John David*

From now on I will call you the spirit man.  
Never in my whole life have I felt this touching  
closeness from a passing. My love for all who  
traveled before you was present in my tears of mourning

I hear your laughter while riding in the car,  
My phone rings and I look for the image  
of your smiling face; it is not there.  
I re-read the "Johnnie stories " online...seeking peace.

You were you. Accept me as I am.  
There was a depth to your loyalty  
Be it family or friends. You had your reach out  
and touch someone frame of mind.

In this age of travel with phone in hand  
suited you well. From the time you opened  
your eyes in the morning to moment you closed  
them at night your phone was close at hand..

If I listen to the wind I hear the tales you told  
In the warm air passing, I feel you still.  
In my house I see an empty chair but  
my heart is filled with your spirit; resting there.

**Carolyn Tarter****The Little Tree**

I have emptiness inside of me

Each time I look where the tree should be.

My heart aches because it did not live

But for five short years. Lessons it did give.

Each year it grew not up but out.

It doesn't look right, some did shout.

It's not growing fast enough,

And its shape is rather rough.

That's not the place where your tree should be.

It will damage the walkway, don't you see.

Take the tree out and put it over there,

Just any ol' place, I don't care.

Yes, that should do it. It's in the ground.

Now, it can grow strong and sound.

What's that you say, the leaves are brown,

Falling crispy to the ground.

Oh, well, dig it up and toss it away.

It was just a funny-looking tree anyway.



**Carolyn Tarter****Oh, Why Can't I Find George**

I wanted to be part of the group,  
To belong and do my share,  
Until there were groups far too many,  
And participants who didn't care.  
"But there really isn't much to do,"  
People said as I volunteered.  
"Your duties are few, hardly any,"  
And as I said yes, they all cheered.  
The telephone rang almost daily  
For just one more job to be done.  
The tasks were involved and were plenty;  
No time to walk—it was run.  
Constantly people demanded  
For just one more favor from me.  
My time, life and energy depleting,  
I had to find George urgently.  
I have to have time for myself,  
To relax and calmly sit.  
Determined I replied sincerely,  
"Leave me alone and let George do it."

**Carol P. Thompson**

**Wearing Sunday Blue**

Morning church is over, the fidgety afternoon  
not yet settled on its intent.

Little brother and his wife, traveling away,  
share with me their splashing pool and sky,  
dressed in softened shades  
of sapphire blue.

The Texas June pours sunshine  
all over, warming me deliciously  
and raising my internal thermometer  
to a high degree of pleasant idleness.

It is hours before the cardinals and thrashers  
will fly to the feeders for evening dinner.

Tall slender pines in a grove behind the house sway  
first toward each other, then away, then back,  
in a mesmerizing treetop dance.

A drone hawk prowls suddenly overhead,  
his outline a dark cutout against the white sunlight.

He swoops low in search of bluejays.

I deflect his threat, waving khaki shorts  
back and forth over my head,  
then settle into a soaking stillness.

Freshly-mown green grass steams  
a summer sachet of quiet contentment.

Somersault memories tumble past,  
landing on my eyelids, softly  
as the solace of a simple Sunday supper.

Previously published in *Paths to Peace~Journey to Wholeness* 2016 Art of Peace - Tyler

**Carol P. Thompson**

**Spice Girls**

Gathering in chattery clusters for a food court lunch,  
the women shop and tend the little ones.  
They serve salsas and stir fry in ethnic cafes  
and paint apricot toenails in salons.

Strong accents and exotic words deny eavesdropping.  
All of us in foreign dress, are master builders  
of invisible walls, hesitant to approach,  
eating next to strangers seldom acknowledged.

Watching, I wish to share in the intimacy of their kitchens,  
to hear them name and employ their cooking utensils,  
the bottles and jars of oils, the red and gold seasonings  
lined up in spice racks with metal curlicues.

For their hands to show how they marinate and marry the herbs  
while breathing the curry, the cumin and coriander,  
sharing work which transcends nationality,  
the fragrance of *tadka*, *banh xeo*, *su cocina*.

Previously published in *The Mas Tequila Review*, Issue # 11

**Mary Tindall****For Keeps***A tribute to Evelyn Corry Appelbee*

She left behind her slant of words,  
the heart made soothing balm in jars  
of stolen calm from sunny days  
that followed nights of twinkling skies.

Inspired, the poet scanned the scenes,  
collected stories, bound the hope  
in pen and ink. Polishing links  
between the lines, she saved for keeps  
the times that chimed: a chair inside  
the yard permitting favored space  
to gather gems enlarging there.

The mockingbirds returned to nest  
outside her window bringing back  
the notes she craved.

Their borrowed Iams inscribed  
in measured verse  
she left as testament.

**Marlene Tucker**

**Reel Young Love**

I was a full breath of fourteen,  
Dizzy with imagination,  
Fed by old movies and,  
The newly discovered history of romance.  
He was a drifting new friend- a stray.  
My brother brought home,  
A twenty-one-year-old grown  
Man who had been  
Hand dipped by God in everything  
That affected the raging senses  
Of a young impressionable  
Teenage female.

He worked for a vending company,  
He was a Snappy Snack man.

He dropped in randomly for supper,  
No more than twice a month,  
Each time thrilling my heart.  
And he knew.

He teased me and pulled my long hair,  
And left my heart reaching for  
Some black and white film.

**Marlene Tucker**

**The Little Bridge**

Fear not when you are traveling home,  
The little bridge will stand.  
The deck is reinforced with love,  
And Mercy fills the span.  
It matters not how fast or slow,  
The weary feet have trod,  
The bents are held unwavering,  
By the mighty hands of God.

We're never really far from home,  
It's just across the way,  
Where, passed the gloom and darkness,  
We can see eternal day.  
Keeping us divided from,  
Discarded earthly dross,  
The little bridge made strong by faith,  
Will bear us all across.

Marlene Tucker

### The Spandex Experience

My daughter was getting married,  
For her I wanted to look great.  
She was planning lots of pictures,  
And, well, I had gained a little weight.  
I noticed a bit of jiggle,  
That I blamed on growing old,  
So I checked into some spandex,  
That promised a true and firming hold.  
I crawled into the one piece thing,  
It lay easy on my neck.  
I couldn't get it passed my navel,  
Though I pulled on it like heck!  
My arm, above the elbow,  
Felt banded close around my chin,  
Snaps that were to join down south,  
Went north when I tried to bend.  
The tension that was harnessed,  
When the garment was in place,  
Was something that I feared would give,  
And coil up in my face.  
And, oh the posture I did have,  
When compressed tightly from both ends,  
I knew I'd never stand up straight,  
Or be able to wave at friends,  
And I'd die if, at the wedding,  
A restroom trip was made.  
Why, that snappy little underwear,  
Would have rolled up like a shade!  
So while fighting off the constrictor,  
With both arms stuck above my head,  
I decided to ditch the true firming hold,  
For something more comfortable instead.

**Thom Woodruff**

**All the Chocolate Covered Strawberries**

All the Hallmark cards ever printed, mailed, sent, received  
Every rose ,singular, bunched, real and artificial  
All those chocolates! All those songs and poems!  
Most will be discarded like a Valentine balloon after the party  
We will move on to Mardi Gras/St Patrick's Day/Easter  
We will move on past love/past loves/all love is temporary  
Some things remain with us-plastic and radioactivity  
They have longer half-lives than marriages and divorces  
They speak Fukushima, Harrisburg, Siberia, Mururoa  
They are in our food chain. In our sushi. In our genes  
Like plastic micro-organisms in our bloodstream  
Our love, desire for and necessity of plastic  
extends into oil and gas industries.  
Like dinosaur blood they survive longer than solar cell reflectors  
More powerful than wind farms.  
Pipelines through Missouri River water supply at Standing Rock  
over peace and love and prayers of water protectors  
It costs the earth. This love. We need a divorce.



**Thom Woodruff****Wood & Water**

WE ARE MADE OF WATER

Without water, we will not live.

Before we were here, elders (trees) breathed

Water flowed and we emerged

We flow back to our origins as dust or as bones

Water always wears away stones

So when Art attempts to explicate

What is thrown up and away from oceans (us)

As driftwood and as sculptures

We walk as wood within water

Water within wood-even when dry

Even when skeleton of frame and cage

Even when suggesting motion (yet still)

We are not wood (yet)-but drifting

Oceans expelled us once

We return to origins.

**Thom Woodruff**

**The Cat & The Moon**

WE LIVE IN MAGICAL TIMES

So when (on one night)-a comet,  
a full moon and a partial eclipse occur  
one would tend to pay attention (to the night skies..

No one can ignore Mother Moon Selene  
as she of one white eye transfixes

our gaze upon the Heavens. BLINK!  
and you may have missed

both comet and eclipse. The moral this-  
if a miracle is unwitnessed, does it exist?  
Celestial events have their own time tunings  
We are a tiny dot in our Universe  
And histories extend far further than 5000 years

Vegetarian dinosaurs are still making EXTINCTION jokes about us  
while shark and rat and crocodile still maintain their ancient forms  
So, if @4.02, i finally realize that our moon spins

without regard to our little earth, it helps me to better understand  
why cats don't care.



### **The 23rd Annual Festival**

A three-day celebration of some of the finest contemporary poets, with readings, a panel discussion and the Virginia Beall Ball Lecture on Contemporary Poetry.

#### **Featuring:**

Catriona O'Reilly, Margaret Mills Harper, Adrian Rice, Micheal O'Siadhail, and a Poetry panel, moderated by Chloe Honum\

#### **About the Event:**

Baylor University's 23rd annual Beall Poetry Festival is supported by the John A. and DeLouise McClelland Beall Endowed Fund, established in 1994 by Mrs. Virginia B. Ball of Muncie, Ind., to honor her parents and to encourage the writing and appreciation of poetry.

#### **Event Details:**

All evening events at 7:00 in Kayser Auditorium, Hankamer (formerly the Business Building)

- Evening of March 15: Catriona O'Reilly Poetry Reading
- Evening of March 16: Adrian Rice poetry reading
- Evening of March 17: Micheal O'Siadhail poetry reading

#### **Afternoon Events (all at 3:30 p.m.)**

- Afternoon of March 15: Student Literary Contest
- Afternoon of March 16: Margaret Mills Harper, The Virginia Beall Ball Lecture in Contemporary Poetry
- Afternoon of March 17: Poetry panel, moderated by Chloe Honum
- All afternoon events will take place in Carroll Science Building, Room 101

#### **Contact Us:**

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