

THE HERON'S NEST — VOLUME 11 (2009)



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VOLUME 11, ISSUE 1 – MARCH, 2009

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FEATURED POEMS

mile high . . .
adding my breath
to the clouds

Jim Kacian

*

what do I know
about the untethered balloon
my daughter's embrace

Yu Chang

*

his ashes
turning into the current
the turtle's ears

Mark Alan Osterhaus

HERON'S NEST AWARD

Inhale . . . exhale. Air in . . . air out. Awake or asleep, our bodies continue the vital action. Though we know that life stops if breath stops, we routinely breathe without conscious thought. Yet, at times we may become intensely aware of this life force, and perhaps of our own certain place in the universe.

mile high . . .
adding my breath
to the clouds

Jim Kacian

The scope of the haiku's significance does not hit me all at once. Upon first reading, I think, "Ahh, an interesting and contemplative observation." But Jim Kacian's poem, rich with literal and metaphorical interpretations, holds me long past that initial response.

I wonder where the poet was at the time of his experience. He could have been on a mountain, climbing a rock face; he might have been skydiving or hang-gliding. He could have been anywhere on land that is a mile above sea level as he watched his exhalation in cold, clean air. Imagining my own breath joining the clouds, I remember a few lines from the poem "High Flight" by John Gillespie Magee, Jr.: "Oh, I have slipped the surly bonds of earth . . . / joined the tumbling mirth / of sun-split clouds . . . / put out my hand, and touched the face of God."

Finding a personal connection to the author's experience leads me beyond his depiction of it. Eight carefully chosen, crucial words, and only nine syllables – with the power to turn a reader's mental gaze outward toward the stars, and inward, to one's most basic

sense of existence and awareness of mortality. Haiku poets hope to instill that level of strength in their work; those who accomplish it are masters indeed.

Practices within several religions and philosophies teach that healing body and mind is directly connected to respiration, that breath joins outer awareness with inner sensation. Breath is the bridge between the body and the mind, our link between the physical and the spiritual, a means of transcending everyday life. In order to regulate the body and mind, one must regulate breath. In Yoga meditation, breath training is essential for deep meditation on the path to self-realization. In meditation as practiced in Zen Buddhism, mind, body, and breath are as one.

Though not necessarily with religious or spiritual consciousness, most of us at some point will face a moment of sharp awareness that everything physically human will eventually become astral dust. On a personal, inward journey guided by Kacian's poem, I realize anew that we all will become infinitesimally smaller pieces of the universe than we are now, our final breath lost to, yet part of, all that is. Rather than sadness, I find comfort in this, and a sense of things being just as they should be.

Kacian handles the fundamentals of haiku writing with skill and ease: solid imagery that sharpens the reader's perception and allows new insight; concision, musicality, immediacy, and clear focus. Ensuring the poem's success, the poet has combined those elements in "mile high" to create the resonance that is prized above all else in this genre. If it is true that the best haiku don't really end, that instead they continue expanding in the reader's mind, then Jim Kacian's poem exemplifies that quality.

— Ferris Gilli
March 2009

POEMS

waking up —
the lightest speckle of rain
on the lake

Jim Kacian

*

bird song
the widening span
of my son's hand

Sandra Simpson

*

spring morning
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someone much older

Christopher Herold

*

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the drifting shapes
of hobos

Jan McGrath

*

church graveyard —
from somewhere close
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Gautam Nadkarni

*

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of constant ripples
a moorhen's nod

Matthew Paul

*

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the young boys spinning
till they're dizzy

Tom Tico

*

graveside —
my breasts
leaking

Nora Wood

*

waxing moon
the sound of a butterfly
emerging

Sandra Simpson

*

spring rain —
her finger shushes
my lips

tori inu

*

at the corner
the shadow
splits in two

Natalia L. Rudychev

*

emptying my bag . . .
the pebble makes me
think of the hill again

K. Ramesh

*

a faint groove
round my ring finger
new moon

Jo McInerney

*

spanning
the canyon wind
California condor

Ann K. Schwader

*

such stillness
I absorb the sound
of creaking bamboo

Yvonne Cabalona

*

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an ant carries —
morning sunshine

Marilyn Appl Walker

*

the sparkle
in our conversation
sunshine on her knees

Greg Piko

*

his face
shaped by the speed
of his bike

Robert Epstein

*

morning meditation
a moth
works the room

Angela Terry

*

country graveyard
confetti
in the grass

Hilary Tann

*

sunrise at the pier —
calamari fishermen
bowing to the sea

Lorin Ford

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on all the heroes

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Matthew Paul

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Karen Cesar

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a silent story

wende skidmore duflon

*

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changing his angle,
changing his song:
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*

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*

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Carolyn Hall

*

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Billie Wilson

*

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*

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FEATURED POEMS

Palm Sunday
the sound of a frond
ripping

Carlos Colón

*

bearing down
on a borrowed pen
do not resuscitate

Yu Chang

*

a slight shake of bells
as the harness comes off
night snow

Chad Lee Robinson

HERON'S NEST AWARD

Palm Sunday
the sound of a frond
ripping

Carlos Colón

How wonderful that it is my turn to write commentary for such a brilliant poet. With only eight words, Carlos Colón takes me on a trip deep inside myself to the core of my emotions. Using the techniques of contrast and narrowing, this poem opens wide for my experiences to catch hold and flow. As the commentator, I go now to where this poem takes me.

It is Palm Sunday. I am a child walking up the steps into our regular church. I feel for the quarter in my pocket. I can't lose that. Mrs. Winston, in her awful purple coat, is in front of us. It smells funny, like our laundry hamper.

Today is the day one of the helpers hands me a green branch. I wave it at Dad, and Mom stops my arm. Last week in Sunday school we learned that people waved these branches and even took off some of their clothing and put it all on the road in front of Jesus when he went to Jerusalem. Wow, that must have been a trip. Maybe Mrs. Winston should have left her coat there, too.

I'm thinking I can tickle someone with this long bushy branch, even though I know I'm going to catch heck. We sit down and I swing my feet back and forth, back and forth, just waiting for the talking and singing to be over so I can get out of the main church with the hard seats and into the classroom. Suddenly I hear "The Old Rugged Cross." I like this song, because I know most of the words. The branch in my hand keeps time

with the music as I bellow, “till my trophies at last I lay down.” The branch accidentally messes the hair of the lady in front of me. Mom grabs my wrist.

After the song is over, the offering plates start coming. I dig into my pocket to get the money. It’s very warm from being in the folds of my corduroy skirt. There’s Tommy! He’s passing one of the plates. He’s been bothering me for a couple of weeks and he keeps telling me I don’t know what I’m talking about. I’ll show him. My right hand makes a fist around the stem of the branch, while my left hand plops the quarter into the middle of all the bills.

Then finally it’s time! I thought the boring part would never end. Mom touches my shoulder and says, “Don’t get into any trouble!”

As I rush past the church kitchen, Tommy jumps out and scares me. He’s a bully. He picks on some of the little kids and takes their quarters. I want to tell on him, but then he’ll pick on me. He says, “You want to go see something?”

I don’t really like Tommy, but it sounds more interesting than Bible verses, so I tag along. He’s got his branch, too, and he’s swinging it high over his own head and whistling a pop song from the radio. When we get to the parking lot through some back doors, Tommy digs into his pocket and brings out a pack of cigarettes and a folder of matches. I know he buys them with the money he takes away from some kindergartners before church. Then he hauls out a transistor radio, a new one. “See,” he says, “I told you I would get one.” His finger is on the dial and he’s trying to bring in KJR, the music station. “All you have to do is lift a bill from the offering plate as it passes past you. It’s easy.”

“Stealing is wrong,” I say. “You can get in real bad trouble if you get caught.”

“Naw!” he says. “You don’t know what you’re talking about. They don’t do anything to kids.”

I feel my cheeks get red with anger. Before I know what I’m doing I put out my branch and say, “En Guard!” Tommy laughs, grabs hold of the branch and rips it through my fingers. When I open my hand it is red with blood and stings like crazy. I know I’m going to get asked what happened. I make up the lie as I run for the bathroom.

I’m pretty sure that Carlos had no idea where my mind would go when he wrote this superb poem. According to Harold G. Henderson in *An Introduction to Haiku*, “Good haiku are full of overtones. The elusiveness that is one of their chief charms is the fact that so much suggestion is put into so few words.” And because we all come to each haiku with our own experiences, I am certain you, too, will find even more ways “Palm Sunday” resonates with you.

On behalf of all the editors and our readers I would like to thank Carlos Colón for sharing his excellent poem with us.

— Alice Frampton
June 2009

POEMS

first light
the beachcomber
begins his rounds

Hilary Tann

*

graduation day —
we hold hands more tightly
as our son's name is called

Kathe L. Palka

*

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of sunset

Lynne Steel

*

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Jennifer Gomoll Popolis

*

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Sandra Simpson

*

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feeds another

Christopher A. White

*

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Michael McClintock

*

long day . . .
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stretched too far

K. Ramesh

*

race weekend
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to the restrooms

Gregory Hopkins

*

scent of rain —
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Nora Wood

*

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Matthew Paul

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Scott Mason

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Amy Whitcomb

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Jeff Hoagland

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big sky
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Timothy Hawkes

*

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Glenn G. Coats

*

lightning
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Megan Arkenberg

*

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topples a king

Curtis Dunlap

*

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old problems

Shane Robitaille

*

the child
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Terri L. French

*

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Sasa Vazic

*

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Yu Chang

*

summer night
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Bob Lucky

*

sitting on the hill
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the Lego castle

Regina F. Smith

*

my kinfolk
don't say a lot
hemlocks all around

Greg Piko

*

wildfire
vultures circling
the outer thermal

Don Miller

*

blue violets . . .
the coolness of evening
ascending the mountain

Michael McClintock

*

leaning trees
almost touch across the creek
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Allan Burns

*

sultry night
the rhythm of oars
stroking the lake

Bill Kenney

*

clipping tags
from luggage . . .
summer's end

Chris Bays

*

rolling in
with the morning fog
seabird on a wave

Pat Benedict

*

mist into rain
the drone of a small plane
blends with our chanting

Christopher Herold

*

headwaters
the dipper's shadow
follows its call

Allan Burns

*

out of names —
we sit silent in the dark
among the stars

Don Holt

*

autumn dusk
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close behind us

Carolyn Hall

*

Point Reyes lighthouse
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Bruce Ross

*

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for the first time

Jordan Hawkes

*

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Natalia L. Rudychev

*

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Margaret D. McGee

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John Barlow

*

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Jeffrey Rabkin

*

farm auction . . .
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of a tomato

Connie Donleycott

*

the off season
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the nude beach

LeRoy Gorman

*

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Ann K. Schwader

*

days shortening —
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of dinosaurs

Lorin Ford

*

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Angelee Deodhar

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Jeff Stillman

*

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Mathew Spano

*

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paul m.

*

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Sari Grandstaff

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Joshua Gage

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Grant Savage

*

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Chuck Brickley

*

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Deb Baker

*

if purple
were my color . . .
twilight snow

H.Gene Murtha

*

Valentine's Day
his dog drops driftwood
at my feet

Lorin Ford

*

breaking the ice
I tell the cattle
it is almost spring

Mark Alan Osterhaus

*

last days of winter —
a jumble of tarnished silver
on the sideboard

Susan Constable

*

older suburb
woven through
with wild plum blossom

Brent Partridge

*

as I reflect
on growing old . . .
daffodils!

Kirsty Karkow

*

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the buds forming
at the scars

Ruth Holzer

*

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garden plans grow around
a toad house

Merrill Ann Gonzales

*

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on a starling's throat

John Barlow

*

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Greg Piko

*

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Timothy Hawkes

*

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A. Thiagarajan

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Cherie Hunter Day

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*

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the way it opens up
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Harriot West

*

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with each move

Jacek Margolak

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Jennifer Gomoll Popolis

*

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my cat finishes
a sparrow

Laurence Stacey

*

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*

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Vaughan Chapman

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where you first hear
the river

Burnell Lippy

*

roaring wind –
my little thoughts
for tomorrow

Tom Clausen

*

ocean breeze
a pitcher and his interpreter
walk to the bullpen

Fay Aoyagi

HERON'S NEST AWARD

honeysuckle
where you first hear
the river

Burnell Lippy

Through thousands of years of development, our genetic ancestors have bequeathed us brain space and ability for the several senses. It may be that discriminating and remembering fragrance, odor, the whole affect of smell, is the most primal of all. This capacity is based in and connects with other parts of the brain from the oldest evolutionary areas: the so-called reptilian brain. We as a species do not have the snouts, the nerve endings, nor do we develop the number of possible connections that a bloodhound, a baboon, or an elephant does.

Humans have less and less need to rely on smell for survival and for hunting. Yet, infants can identify their own mothers and other close care givers with just this sense alone. The mystery of human attraction, even lust, is influenced by pheromones and by artificial scents such as my late wife's perfumes. I remember especially her "go-out-fancy" or celebration scent. I still smell it occasionally in street-corner crowds or in a mall. As memory floods in, it is all I can do not to turn my head and search.

Burnell Lippy has created a confluence of senses in this haiku. It has layers of complexity with his perceptions now and of the past. He not only smells the sweet flowers, he has paired the sensation with a specific spot from which he also hears water — water that is rushing, in motion. This too is a basic skill from our genetic makeup. Finding water by the sound or scent of it can be imperative for survival. Burnell's skill allows me to make my own version of this haiku, that he and I are walking or cycling a set route. Probably we are in a town, maybe on a sidewalk, maybe on a path in a park.

A lot of towns in the US and in Burnell's New York State have rivers near or through them. Old patterns of settlement developed from needs for transportation, water power for commerce, agriculture, or just for drinking. Most of the year the Poet is aware of getting closer to water falling — at just this spot. This assumes no sprinkler is going *thwicka-thwicka*, no ambulance siren is wailing, and no great wind is shaking bushes and trees.

A distant waterfall or cascade is an amalgam of mostly mid-tones and bass, as the treble is lost because it is usually heard directly. Bass tones can be felt as vibration even through the ground. A distant waterfall can be difficult to echolocate precisely.

On the circuit, this walk taken habitually for exercise or to a destination, that usual awareness, the watersound, is joined by announcement of summer. Honeysuckle. It has a very distinctive bouquet and its bloom marks confirmation that summer has arrived in most of the northern hemisphere around the world. I assume the vine here, cultivated and wild in N. America, is part of a yard or garden.

At this moment, at this spot, is a meeting of senses. How beautifully soft is this word "honeysuckle." The rest of Poet Lippy's construction just rushes softly downhill to us.

Ahh, memory!

— Paul MacNeil
September 2009

POEMS

cabbages starting
to touch each other
late-summer heat

Burnell Lippy

*

oars in unison
slicing the river
slicing the moon

Angela Terry

*

dimly lit porch
the newspaper boy
no longer a boy

Robert Epstein

*

the storm's rain
rising as mist . . .
wings of a barn owl

John Barlow

*

a curlew
holds its second note . . .
shadows lengthening

Lorin Ford

*

small town
hospital . . .
sound of the typewriter

K. Ramesh

*

night time —
moths queuing
at the cash machine

Martin Fraser

*

late summer flowers . . .
the joy
of a good sneeze

Helen Buckingham

*

settlers' cemetery
an old yew creaks
at noon

Robert Bauer

*

gleam of mudflats —
a snail retreats
into its shell

Diana Webb

*

on a field
of ripe tomatoes
the empty wooden crates

Dariel Suarez

*

every place taken
on the finch feeder
September rain

Aubrie Cox

*

split milkweed pods —
getting to know him
at his memorial

Carolyn Hall

*

a leaf —
its descent stopped
by a child

Francis Masat

*

Wembley Stadium —
a blackbird sings
to empty seats

Martin Fraser

*

Labor Day —
scraping mold off
government cheese

Curtis Dunlap

*

breathe in
breathe out
autumn moon

Michele Root-Bernstein

*

autumn dusk —
a fine layer of mist
over the cricket pitch

Julie Thorndyke

*

first mouthful
of a warm cider doughnut
scarlet hillsides

Doug Kutney

*

moon at the window . . .
I cut another eye
from the potato

Lorin Ford

*

kneading dough –
a cold wind gathers
yellow leaves

Ashley Rodman

*

first frost
the birds that stay
the birds that go

Beverley George

*

mother's keepsakes . . .
the questions
I never asked

Jo McInerney

*

quilting circle
we rearrange pieces
of our lives

Brenda J. Gannam

*

fishbowl
telling a child
about death

Collin Barber

*

a handful of kindling
in the fireplace —
moving day

Cherie Hunter Day

*

deep woods
an old stone wall
buried in leaves

William Cullen Jr.

*

making resolutions
piles of fallen needles
beneath the pine

Mark Smith

*

house sitting . . .
the warmth
of my friend's cat

Connie Donleycott

*

winter evening
my boy's
thin shoulders

Marcus Larsson

*

hundreds of gulls
feeding their chicks
he points at the dead one

Greg Piko

*

first warm day —
the woodpecker works
a shiny stump

Cindy Zackowitz

*

dark hallway
an explosion
of cut lilac

Hilary Tann

*

muddy gloves
a colourful bunch
of empty flower pots

Garry Eaton

*

next to the tracks
an old bottle
catching dawn

Shae Davidson

*

years later
mist still gathers
in the same hollow

Greg Piko

*

a tap
on the shoulder —
a raindrop

Walter Franceschi

*

town cannon
a finch with twigs vanishes
down the muzzle

Mathew Spano

*

night rain
the bedroom fills
with memories

Dietmar Tauchner

*

we let
our secrets out
empty nest

James Chessing

*

first night out
on their own . . .
my seedlings

Laryalee Fraser

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*

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*

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Jacek Margolak

*

summer solstice
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*

swimmers
at the middle of the lake
graduation night

Marcus Larsson

*

stars begin to fade . . .
so much music
from unseen birds

Tyrone McDonald

*

slow train journey
a gull's shadow
takes the lead

Nola Borrell

*

worn out day —
rocks the river left
on top

Gary Hotham

*

midsummer
a speedboat slices
the lake in half

Carmen Sterba

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scorching heat —
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in midstream

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what to tell her . . .
bruised mint

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pulling off
cockleburs

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summer's eve
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Janelle Barrera

*

late summer
crossing the memory
of a stream

Jo McInerney

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beach cabanas
flapping in the breeze
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Mark Alan Osterhaus

*

handshake
not a kiss
starless night

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summer evening
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Bob Lucky

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a Sioux tunic
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behind smudged glass

Pat Tompkins

*

thin marsh ice
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Glenn Coats

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year's end

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Boolarra, Australia

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Ron Moss
Leslie Vale, Tasmania, Australia

Victor Ortiz
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Brent Partridge
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Christopher Patchel
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Stephen A. Peters
Bellingham, Washington

Greg Piko
Canberra, Australia

Jennifer Gomoll Popolis
Springfield, Illinois

K. Ramesh
Adyar, Chennai, India

Chad Lee Robinson
Pierre, South Dakota

Ashley Rodman
Champaign, Illinois

David Rodrigues
Lisbon, Portugal

Michele Root-Bernstein
East Lansing, Michigan

David Rosenthal
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Natalia Rudychev
Des Plaines, Illinois

Grant D. Savage
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Ann K. Schwader

Westminster, Colorado

Katrina Shepherd
Perthshire, Scotland

Sandra Simpson
Tauranga, New Zealand

Mark Smith
Keyser, West Virginia

Barbara Snow
Eugene, Oregon

Carmi Soifer
Suquamish, Washington

Mathew Spano
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Melissa Spurr
Joshua Tree, California

Lynne Steel
Hillsboro Beach, Florida

Carmen Sterba
University Place, Washington

Jeff Stillman
Norwich, New York

Dariel Suarez
Miami, Florida

André Surridge
Hamilton, New Zealand

George Swede
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Hilary Tann
Schuylerville, New York

Dietmar Tauchner
Puchberg, Austria

Angela Terry
Lake Forest Park, Washington

Julie Thorndyke
New South Wales, Australia

Pat Tompkins
San Mateo, California

Jennie Townsend
O'Fallon, Missouri

Marilyn Appl Walker
Madison, Georgia

Diana Webb
Leatherhead, Surrey, England

Harriot West
Eugene, Oregon

Rodney Williams
Trafalgar, Victoria, Australia

Quendryth Young
Alstonville, New South Wales, Australia

Cindy Zackowitz
Anchorage, Alaska

Joan Zimmerman
Santa Cruz, California

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Milky Way –
maybe tonight
I'll conceive

Brenda J. Gannam

*

twinkling stars
again we pass the house
we'll never buy

Robert Epstein

*

Wounded Knee –
trying not to speak
above the wind

Chad Lee Robinson

HERON'S NEST AWARD

Milky Way —
maybe tonight
I'll conceive

Brenda J. Gannam

With the simplicity of haiku, this poem moves gracefully and naturally from the vast to the personal.

Is there life out there? With so many possibilities, it seems almost as if there must be. But the distance between our earth and other places that might simultaneously be harboring living creatures is not only unknown but, in a certain way, unknowable. We have mathematical means of expressing both unimaginable distances of space and inconceivably fine distinctions of matter. But none of us has a real sense of these things because they are beyond our senses.

How many stars are there in the Milky Way? There is an approximate answer to this but it is only a number and quite unlike our experience of looking at the sky on some incredibly clear night. How many sperm and egg cells are produced for each instance in which a human being is the result? Again, there is an answer but it is only an abstraction. Each of us is the unique result of circumstances that might have gone billions of trillions of other ways. The odds against any one of us existing are astronomical, yet here we are.

But these considerations are cold. What the poet wants is something she can respond to in a deeply instinctive and intuitive way: to experience the genesis of life within herself. The possibility of pregnancy is a prime example of the extraordinary in the ordinary, something that happens all the time but is still touched with primal wonder.

– John Stevenson
December 2009

POEMS

temperature drop —
the way stars are
a witness

Gary Hotham

*

swollen moon —
the sudden urge
to push

Francine Banwarth

*

the fire's scent
lingering
morning moon

Clare McCotter

*

cold snap . . .
waking to the creak
of house timbers

Catherine J.S. Lee

*

clatter of pipes
when I turn the tap off
snowy night

Christopher Patchel

*

a hawk's cry
I listen
to the gathering dark

Deb Baker

*

how strange this human body
not queen anne's lace
not thistle

John Martone

*

frigid morning
the brittle echo
of a crow

Warren Gossett

*

winter evening
my boy calls
to say he's feeling better

Marcus Larsson

*

an ancient wick
casts shadows on the wall —
Mother's soft humming

Kushal Poddar

*

an empty shot glass
on the windowsill
evening snow

Collin Barber

*

heavy going
through the waterlogged field
clay-pigeon shards

Matthew Paul

*

a rainy slope
where legions fell . . .
thistles

Dennis Tomlinson

*

wild mint
in the spring forest
a chance encounter

Sanjukta Asopa

*

rocky shore . . .
the trout on my line
pulls you closer

Ashley Rodman

*

cabin fever . . .
bullrushes bursting
in the vase

Susan Constable

*

shredded checks —
the robin weaves my life
into its nest

Merrill Ann Gonzales

*

warm breeze —
new ivy leaves finding
their place in the sun

Barbara Campitelli

*

spring moon . . .
from the street girl's hand
a shadow rabbit

Mary Wuest

*

crabapple blossom —
the older twin always
one step behind

Sandra Simpson

*

mountain retreat —
a layer of dust
on all the canned goods

Karen Cesar

*

green-black sheen
of a rooster's tail feathers
my neighbor's new car

Laura Garrison

*

closing light
the whistles of siskins
in the fringes of the wood

John Barlow

*

dead end street
bougainvillea overflows
the chain link fence

Yu Chang

*

broken screen —
the house finch
looks in

George Dorsty

*

at the entrance
to the whistle-pig's burrow
mountain bluebells

Karen Cesar

*

when you think
you've heard it all —
brown thrasher

H. Gene Murtha

*

we both squeeze
through the kissing gate . . .
thunderclap

Colin Stewart Jones

*

desert wind
a wire fence stretches
to nowhere

Emma Dalloway

*

dry spell
the dust of sparrows
blown by the wind

Francine Banwarth

*

melting bitumen
the beetle and I
reduced to a crawl

Sandra Simpson

*

smell of grass
a drop of sweat sizzles
on the mower

Nathalie Buckland

*

the smile
in his voice
starshine

Sabine Miller

*

listening to the sound
from the deep well . . .
stone on stone

Edward J. Rielly

*

poplar seeds . . .
all my dreams
coming true

Aurora Antonovic

*

long afternoon . . .
here and there
a butterfly's shadow

K. Ramesh

*

deodorant scent
tonight, love,
I am a spring wind

Dan Schwerin

*

Thistledown
drifting toward its shadow
my friend's last day

Joan Zimmerman

*

roots down deep . . .
mud paddies bake
in the midday sun

Katherine Cudney

*

summer dusk —
watering the garden
then my feet

Connie Donleycott

*

ancient fir scar —
a banana slug pulls one eye
inward

Ruth Yarrow

*

blackberry stains
on the white sidewalk
his urgent kiss

Megan Arkenberg

*

late summer talk —
the oil lamp smoke
going in circles

Elizabeth Crocket

*

sunset . . .
the fishing boats closer
to each other

Valeria Simonova-Cecon

*

cracked boulder
an acorn
settles in

Yu Chang

*

shelling almonds
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childhood

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*

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*

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through my garden glove

Joann Klontz

*

essays to grade
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on the gravel road

LeRoy Gorman

*

cattail seed
floating — the places
I would go

Cora Whitmore

*

morning fog
on the coastal route
wild mustard

Deborah P Kolodji

*

dragonfly pair
female so clear
through his wings

Grant Savage

*

dusk
with nowhere to turn
sunflower

Christopher Herold

*

midnight bus
the door swings open
to moonlight

Laurence Stacey

*

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beat out a tune

Alan S. Bridges

*

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Bob Lucky

*

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coots settling
in the reeds

Neal Whitman

*

late moon halo
fish scales reflecting
on my father's blade

Ron Moss

*

the hound's tail matches
the turn signal's beat
almost home

Pat Tompkins

*

whistling to myself —
the changing rhythms
of marsh grass

Colin Stewart Jones

*

fog blurring the hills —
to pass the time
we reminisce

Adelaide Shaw

*

high autumn sky
I return a greeting
from the dog

Fay Aoyagi

*

dusting over
dad's bowl of wheat pennies
late autumn light

Joyce Clement

*

you have
no voicemail messages
winter wind

Scott Mason

*

we talk . . .
most of the rose petals
on the table

George Swede

*

the barnacled flukes
of migrating whales . . .
mountains lost in haze

John Barlow

*

far below
migrating geese
follow the river

Rohini Gupta

*

parting year . . .
someone has died in the house
with the shoveled walk

Michael McClintock

*

all that sound
from a single sparrow —
winter morning

Dick Whyte

*

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*

in the tide mark
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Frances Jones

*

low tide
waiting for grandchildren
to happen

_kala

*

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*

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*

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on my finger

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*

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for the flame

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*

summer rain . . .
the red earth
reddens

Helen Buckingham

*

sheet lightning
a grey cat flickers
through the grass

Berenice Mortimer

*

three-day beard
a large rock
divides the river

paul m.

*

pedal boat
I overtake
a duck

André Surridge

*

rainbow
his sketch stippled
with droplets

Wende Skidmore DuFlon

*

3:30 a.m.
a single layer
of birdsong

Carlos Colón

*

tempers flare
the X-mark on the back
of a stinkbug

Cherie Hunter Day

*

Venus and Jupiter
the barechested fire-eater
taunts his crowd

Matthew Paul

*

an arc of ibis
above the harbor
blue sky day

Greg Piko

*

summer dusk
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left in his glass

jennie townsend

*

squad car
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distant thunder

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*

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Jose del Valle

*

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*

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as we walk from the church:
white dresses

Chris Jay Becker

*

lightning strike
the majestic poplar's
creamy heartwood

Elizabeth Howard

*

ashes of roses —
what once was our secret
now just mine

Janelle Barrera

*

mountain top —
the photograph of the view
before the view

Hilary Tann

*

the big empty —
half grass
half sky

Chad Lee Robinson

*

trail dust
all those years mother hiked
behind us

Harriot West

*

heat lightning
a skunk's scent
wets the night air

Martin Vest

*

late summer:
waking to the vacant O
of the wren's house

Al Ortolani

*

faded roses
some of the words
I can't take back

Stephen A. Peters

*

summer twilight —
the red ball runs
the final wicket

Ashley Rodman

*

summer's end
the familiar scent
of the old salt cedar

C. William Hinderliter

*

a hummingbird
follows the falling leaf
my friend's untimely death

Victor P. Gendrano

*

paper lanterns
a white eggplant glows
beneath withered leaves

Pat Tompkins

*

simmering rice grains
in the pot —
patter of rain

Sanjuktaa Asopa

*

the cricket
stuck in a minor key —
Milky Way

Tyrone McDonald

*

morning glory
still some openings
I haven't seen

Dan Schwerin

*

9/11 moment of silence
the clicks
of a thousand cameras

Carlos Colón

*

the only cafe
surrounded by trucks
harvest moon

Lynn Edge

*

salt marsh
the runnels deepen
through cordgrass

Cherie Hunter Day

*

from one skyscraper
to the next
emerging moon

Natalia L. Rudychev

*

gooseflesh
in the cold grass
crickets

Peter Yovu

*

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Carolyn Hall

*

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Helen Russell

*

late autumn
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*

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*

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I try to remember
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*

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André Surridge

*

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candles flicker through
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Angelee Deodhar

*

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*

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in blades of grass
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Chen-ou Liu

*

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into thistle

Renee Owen

*

home game
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*

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*

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Katrina Shepherd

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Edward J. Rielly
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Ashley Rodman
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Natalia L. Rudychev
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Helen Russell
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Atlanta, Georgia

Mary Wuest
Arlington, Virginia

Ruth Yarrow
Seattle, Washington

Quendryth Young
Alstonville, New South Wales, Australia

Peter Yovu
Middlesex, Vermont

Cindy Zackowitz

Anchorage, Alaska

Joan Zimmerman

Santa Cruz, California

MEMORIAL PAGE FOR PAUL O. WILLIAMS

TRIBUTES TO PAUL O. WILLIAMS

Walden —
took his skipping stone with him
when he went

vincent tripi

*

sudden gust
a mimosa blossom floats
closer to the clouds

Carlos Colón

*

clouded moon
praising the maker
of the fish sauce

Michael McClintock

*

where the trout vanished ripples expand through the pond

Marian Olson

*

Walden absorbs
a fallen oak —
the cold, damp hush

— Peggy Willis Lyles

POEMS BY PAUL O. WILLIAMS FROM *THE HERON'S NEST*

the gardener's truck
willow leaves scattering
down miles of highway

*

a pause in the rain —
the old man goes out
to check the mailbox

*

in the corner
the usual spiderweb,
the usual moth

*

day ending
without sunset, night coming
without stars

*

rainy morning —
while getting the paper
the smell of a skunk

*

a common wire fence —
then a western tanager
sits there a moment

*

the river —
the town also spilling out

of the mountains

*

not a laughing mouth,
a bent bow, or an eyelash,
the slender new moon

*

cormorants near dusk
perched over the tidewater
all hunched, all black

*

where nobody cares,
growing with green vigor
the sumac

*

in a flash
from sitting to hovering
the hummingbird

*

goose down on the lake
blowing into water weeds —
my brother's business

MEMORIAL PAGE FOR D. CLAIRE GALLAGHER

SELECTED POEMS BY D. CLAIRE GALLAGHER FROM *THE HERON'S NEST*.

pensioned —
filling the days
with late tomatoes

*

a smear of stars
from horizon to horizon —
the loon's necklace

*

slicing apples
into the dented pan —
howl of the wind

*

Continental Divide —
a bumblebee gathers pollen
from both slopes

*

scent of windfalls —
the whisper
of solitaire cards

*

ancient sequoia
straw hat
in my hand

*

end of daylight savings
the orange pills
cut in half

*

wind in the reeds —
my daughter speaks
about forgiveness

*

trellis of roses —
her being-photographed face
opens

*

New Year's morning —
the circles
of a toy train

*

mare's tail clouds —
Great Aunt pointing out
where stores used to be

*

day beginning
lupine
at the end of the wren's flight

*

alpine air —
losing the few stars I know
to the skyful

*

dusty mullions —
early twilight creeping
from living room corners

*

nine-month belly —
she slowly unwraps
the heirloom crèche

*

kindling pile —
Mother retrieves the stick
engraved by beetles

*

getting to know the pine . . .
clotted resin
on the seat of my pants

*

the secret she tells
a wave opens
over the headland

READERS' CHOICE AWARDS FOR 2008

The Editors and Web Master of The Heron's Nest are pleased to announce the results of the Readers' Choice Awards for favorite poems and poets featured in Volume X, 2008.

Our thanks to all who found time to consider the 472 haiku we published in 2008 and to register votes for their favorites. We heard from fewer voters this year, compared to last year's record total of eighty-eight. Still, this year's total of seventy-four voters is a good turnout. We sent fewer reminders about voting than in recent years and will remedy that next time in hopes of hearing from even more readers.

The print edition of Volume X, to be mailed in April, will include the contents of all four regular issues, the entire awards report, including winning poems and poets along with commentary, special mentions, and a generous sample of comments by readers on individual poems and on the voting process, plus winning entries in the Illustration Contest.

And now on to the results!

FAVORITE POEMS

GRAND PRIZE: POEM OF THE YEAR
(12 votes totaling 100 points)

Hiroshima Day
multi-color threads
on the weaving machine

Fay Aoyagi (Volume 10:4)

FIRST RUNNER-UP

(10 votes totaling 75 points)

first snow
the snug fit of spices
in their rack

Burnell Lippy (Volume 10:1)

SECOND RUNNER-UP

(10 votes totaling 72 points)

thumbing a coat
 over my shoulder
cloudless sky

Christopher Herold (Volume 10:2)

THIRD RUNNER-UP

(11 votes totaling 71 points)

one deep breath
for a moment the pine
is part of me

Harriot West (Volume 10:4)

POPULAR POETS

This category results from totaling the number of points awarded to each poet for their entire body of work in Volume X. The most poems one can have accepted in The Nest each year is eight. Obviously, the more poems a person publishes, the greater chances he or she has for garnering votes. It follows that success in the Readers' Choice Awards is significantly affected by a poet's earlier success in having work accepted by the editors throughout the year. One poet had eight poems in Volume X. Two poets had seven poems published and four poets had six published.

To put into perspective how well the winners did: the average total points for combined works this year was 26.

GRAND PRIZE: POET OF THE YEAR

(21 total votes for 4 of 5 poems = 140 points)

Burnell Lippy

FIRST RUNNER-UP

(22 total votes for 6 of 8 poems = 136 points)

Carolyn Hall

SECOND RUNNER-UP

(19 total votes for 5 of 5 poems = 127 points)

Christopher Herold

THIRD RUNNER-UP

(17 total votes for 5 of 5 poems = 104 points)

Gary Hotham

We would also like to commend the following poets for garnering well over the average total point score of 26.

Fay Aoyagi: one poem received votes totaling 100 points

Peter Yovu: 4 of 4 poems received votes totaling 100 points

Harriot West: 3 of 6 poems received votes totaling 98 points

Lorin Ford: 5 of 5 poems received votes totaling 81 points

Connie Donleycott: 4 of 5 poems received votes totaling 78 points

Collin Barber: 4 of 4 poems received votes totaling 71 points

Chad Lee Robinson: 6 of 7 poems received votes totaling 68 points

D. Claire Gallagher: 4 of 5 poems received votes totaling 67 points

Susan Constable: 3 of 4 poems received votes totaling 65 points

Hilary Tann: 6 of 7 poems received votes totaling 65 points

Roberta Beary: 4 of 5 poems received votes totaling 63 points

Paul Pfleuger Jr.: 4 of 5 poems received votes totaling 63 points

Mark Arvid White: one poem received votes totaling 63 points

Ellen Compton: 3 of 3 poems received votes totaling 61 points

Dietmar Tauchner: 3 of 4 poems received votes totaling 60 points

Ann K. Schwader: 4 of 5 poems received votes totaling 58 points

Marian Olson: 2 of 2 poems received votes totaling 55 points

Ruth Yarrow: 3 of 4 poems received votes totaling 55 points

Randy Brooks: 2 of 2 poems received votes totaling 54 points

Bill Kenney: 2 of 2 poems received votes totaling 52 points

Our congratulations to all contributors to Volume X of *The Heron's Nest*. Every one of your poems passed through a multi-layered selection process and garnered appreciative readings from our panel of editors. We are grateful to have been able to feature your work this year.

John Stevenson

FIFTH ANNUAL ILLUSTRATION CONTEST

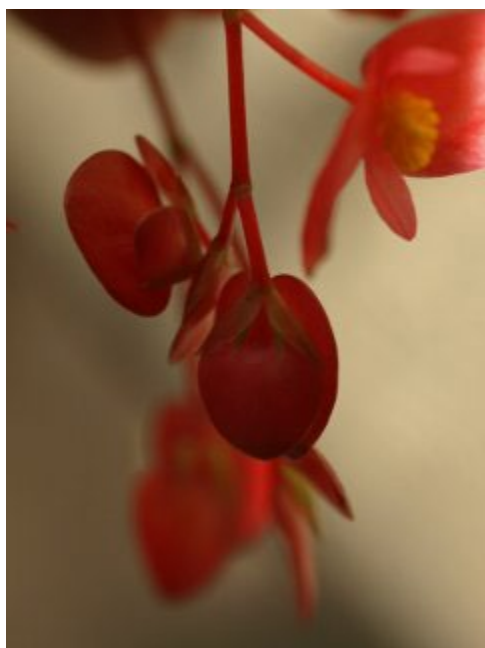
This year's illustration contest drew over two hundred fifty entries. Thank you for making our selection process so difficult! Congratulations to those whose work has been selected and our deep appreciation for everyone who has offered their work. As always, it was with a mixture of gratitude and regret that we enjoyed but ultimately had to relinquish the opportunity to use so many truly beautiful images. We hope that those of you who have not been rewarded with a selection this year will not be discouraged and that we will have the opportunity of seeing more of your work later this year.



Front Cover: Merrill Ann Gonzales



Back Cover: William John Watkins



Spring: Wende Skidmore DuFlon



Summer: Sandra Simpson



Autumn: Claudia Brefeld



Winter: Stefanie Lamb



Overview: Claudia Brefeld



Readers' Choices: Ron Moss

ABOUT *THE HERON'S NEST*

*where tradition and innovation meet ...
and complement each other*

PHILOSOPHY

It is our intention to present haiku in which the outward form of each poem has been determined by two important elements. The primary element is the poetic experience, faithfully and uniquely evoked in words. The second element helps to shape the first; it is the poet's knowledge and respect for traditional haiku values. When well balanced these elements result in work that is distinctively and unmistakably haiku.

"Poetic experiences" are those which inspire us to express ourselves creatively. "Haiku values" are the traditional underpinnings, both Japanese and Western, by which haiku sensibility has evolved into what it is today, and which will continue to shape haiku traditions in the future. There are many ideals equated with each of the various haiku forms. No one poem can embody all, or even a majority of these ideals. Each of us must decide for ourselves what is important in the writing and appreciating of haiku.

STAFF

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TECHNICAL NOTE

This volume is a 2024 reproduction of an issue from 2009 and may contain errors of transcription or typography. For current information about the journal and staff, and more recent issues, please visit us at <https://theheronsnest.com>.