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Barbara Hamby

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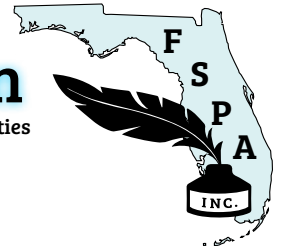
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Mary Marcelle, President,
Florida State Poets Association

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

The contract is signed, and the deposit has been paid. **Spring Fling is officially going to happen!** After two and a half years of cancelled conventions and video conference substitutions, we will meet, for real, in person, April 29 – May 1 at the peaceful retreat at the San Pedro Spiritual Center in Winter Park. This time, we're featuring **Sean Sexton**, who we will install as our newest chancellor.

I'm certainly looking forward to seeing everyone again. This convention will be full of exciting, poetry-fueled fun that we haven't seen for a while. Of course, we'll have lots of opportunities for open-mic readings, allowing everyone the opportunity to share their newest works. We'll set up book sales Friday so everyone will have a chance to browse member publications at their leisure. We're even working on a video conference version for those who cannot attend in person.

Breaking News: We have a new chapter!

We are pleased to welcome the newest chapter of the Florida State Poets Association, the South Florida Poets, led by their President, Dustin Brookshire. We are so happy to have a second group in South Florida, and we look forward to the poetic contributions from the South Florida Poets. We wish them all the success in their new chapter.

Janet Watson brings us her vast reserves of poetry knowledge with a workshop on "Energy in Poetry." We'll get another chance to write with **Marc Davidson's** presentation on limericks. Our keynote speaker, **Sean Sexton**, will entertain us with his delightful poetry that often sings the cowboy's song.

For those who have been watching and wanting to know more, **Kevin Campbell**, FSPA's own Slam Coordinator will present an introduction to spoken word poetry. That presentation will foreshadow the evening's entertainment, the official Florida State Poets Association division of the Blackberry Peach Spoken Word Competition. The winner of this competition will represent FSPA in the national competition, to be held this October in Daytona Beach.

Since we aren't bound by the huge fees of a hotel contract, we're able to offer Saturday lunch at no cost to everyone attending. Dinners will be less expensive, and we'll have coffee and pastries for a complimentary continental breakfast Saturday and Sunday. Even those wishing to stay overnight will find rooms are less expensive. Of course, all distance and safety protocols will be in place.

Because of the structure of the contract with the San Pedro Center, it is essential that you register and book your room as soon as possible. We will not be able to provide rooms for anyone who has not registered by the deadline, April 8. Please be sure to send your room registration to Robyn Weinbaum by that time. You can pay by check through snail mail or use PayPal and email to send her the payment and registration information. Her email address is FSPA-Treasurer@AOL.com.

See you there!

Mary Marcelle



*Julie Cummings President,
National Federation
of State Poetry Societies*

**NFSPS Contests
deadline is
March 15!**

**There are fifty
contests you can
enter. All mem-
bers of FSPA are
also members of
NFSPS.**

[Here is the link](#)

Dear Florida Poetry Family,

As I sit here, having finished sorting my own printed poems and deciding which ones [to enter in the NFSPS contests](#), I ask myself the question: “What makes a great poem?”

I have always been of the mindset that different poems speak to different readers, perhaps that’s why I like The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock and others do not. For some reason, this is the only Elliot poem I really like. I have dissected it and found that so much of that one poem is what I love about poetry. In high school, I chose that poem as the one I would memorize, and after, I wish I had chosen Dorothy Parker’s Resumé instead! It is much shorter and definitely to the point.

The assignment had me searching for deeper meaning in a poem and implied that all poetry is difficult or contains hidden messages. Since that assignment, I’ve always asked myself what the poem says to me after the first reading, not tried to find what is hidden inside until much later. Perhaps this is not the correct way to read poetry, but it works for me. Do I dare disturb the universe?

Later, if the poem speaks to me in a way I want to explore, I look at it more critically. Here are the simplified steps I take when reading poetry:

1. I first read it silently.
2. I read it out loud so I can find areas that I want to explore further.
3. I examine the layout on the page.
4. I try to see if it is a certain form.
5. I try to find all the poetic elements that have been used.
6. I examine the diction.
7. I look for rhyme.
8. I look for references – historical or otherwise.
9. I see if there are words I maybe want to understand a bit more.
10. I seek out the poetic elements used.

I often refer to other books about poetry or websites to help my understanding of the poem. My library is extensive and I am always looking for more books on the craft of poetry.

When my poetry society, Columbine Poets, holds our critiques, I rarely ask the poet what they meant. I believe the message is for me to interpret. Our critiques are not long enough to complete all the steps I list above, but I can truncate them for that purpose. The steps above are when I have lots of time, and are done when I really study a poet or poetic form.

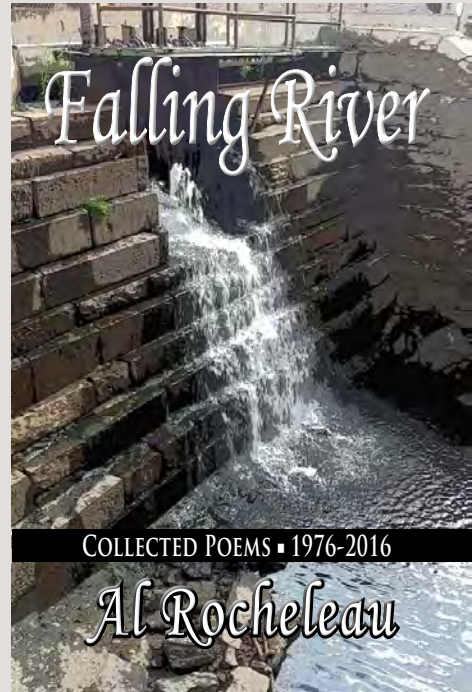
I guess my point in writing this is that poetry is for everyone and we all do our own study of it. Now, I just need to apply this study to my own poetry.

Julie Cummings

Falling River—Forty Years of Collected Poems by Al Rocheleau

In *Falling River*, FSPA's past president, poet Al Rocheleau, offers a comprehensive collection of his work, spanning five decades beginning in 1976. Al's verse has appeared in more than eighty magazines in six countries. It can be found at websites as diverse as the Surratt House Museum in Washington, DC and the Saint Bernadette Institute of Sacred Art in New Mexico, and earned honors such as the Thomas Burnett Swann Award from the Gwendolyn Brooks Writers Association, and a nomination for the Forward Poetry Prize in the U.K. *Falling River* offers all kinds of poems of various forms, intents, and levels of ambition, poems heavy and light, sacred and profane. Renowned poet Lola Haskins says of Al's poetry, "These poems, so full of love and seriousness, have a good chance of lasting."

To purchase your copy, click this [link](#).



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PROFILES IN POETRY



Barbara reads to Patsy, Photo by Catherine Husum Taylor

Barbara Hamby

A recent interview with FSPA Past President Al Rocheleau

Rocheleau: Born in New Orleans and raised in Honolulu, your background features some of the most colorful locales and aspects of the American experience. How have those points of reference threaded your work over the years?

Hamby: I only remember New Orleans through my mother's stories. She loved the city so much, and talked about living there and the people she met when she was a newlywed and new mother. We moved when I was four, and my first memories are after that move. I was ten when we moved to Hawai'i, so those memories are strong and vivid. For the first year we lived in a little farming community on the leeward side of O'ahu called Wai'anae (WHY-ahn-aye), and I went to Wai'anae Elementary School. We had just left Virginia, and I had gone to a segregated school though I had no awareness of the fact. In Wai'anae I went to school with blacks, whites, Hawaiian, Japanese, Chinese, Samoan, Filipino, Portuguese, and those are just the ones I remember. And it was a seamless transfer. I loved school, and I loved learning about all the new customs and foods. And Hawai'i was so beautiful. The mountains are this otherworldly green, and the Pacific is as blue as the sky, especially when compared to the gray-green Atlantic. I feel as if Hawaii is a paradise that I keep inside me always, a room in my memory palace that I can go to when I need the scent of the ocean or the flowers that are everywhere.

I have to say that Hawai'i doesn't really come up that often in my poetry. I really saved it for fiction. My book of stories, *Lester Higata's 20th Century*, is set in Honolulu, and is really a love letter to that city. The stories revolve around a Japanese-American man who fought with the Allies during WWI in a much-decorated battalion that was instrumental in liberating Rome. I've been working for a long time on a novel that is set in Hawai'i during the 1960s. It was 600 pages at one time, and now it's 350. I don't know what's going to happen with it, but I've really loved working on it.

(Continued on next page)

Rocheleau: Tell us about the recent collection, *Holoholo*.

Hamby: “Holoholo” is the Hawaiian word for walking out with no destination in mind. I love this idea and the word. Other languages have similar words, for example “le flâneur” in French, which describes someone who walks a city’s streets (probably Paris) observing what is going on in the passing moment. It is a word that is really limited to men, but about five years ago, Lauren Elkin wrote a book, *Flâneuse*, about women who walk in cities. Often, the word “idle” is associated with the flaneur/flaneuse, which I suppose is part of the Hawaiian word, but the Hawaiian culture doesn’t have that built-in striving and ambition that might ridicule aimless wandering. There is also the English word “gallivant,” which is to go about from one place to another in pursuit of pleasure, and the Australian word, “walkabout,” which is a spiritual journey that young aboriginal men take into the wilderness. Again, only for men, though there were so many taboos in ancient Hawaiian culture that who knows if women were allowed to go holoholo.

Holoholo is made up of odes, and is a testament to my love of the ode, which is often defined as a poem of praise on an exalted subject. It may have begun that way, but



Enheduanna, high priestess of Nanna (c. 23rd century BCE)

it has changed from the first poems found on cuneiform tablets which temple poets wrote in ancient Sumeria praising gods, goddesses, and kings. Even the Hebrew *Psalms* that so influenced Whitman and Ginsberg are involved in a complicated kind of praise. Jehovah is a beneficent deity, but he also has a lot of rules and a nasty temper when they are broken.

Nearly 2,000 years after the poems of praise by the Sumerian temple priestess Enheduanna, Pindar was writing odes for the victors of the Greek games at Olympia, Nemea, Korinth, and Delphi. And 400 years after Pindar, in the work of Horace, the ode became a more intimate examination of human consciousness in both its public and private masks. The English Romantic poets took the ode and made it a palimpsest of consciousness. Then in the 1950s the great Chilean poet Pablo Neruda wrote his *Odas Elementales* and changed the ode forever with his short lines and praise of such ordinary subjects as the tomato and his socks.

Is the ode a form? While an ode can have a specific form, as in Pindar and Horace, it seems to me more of a poetic stance, a poetic investigation of what it means to be a human being at any moment in time. Odes seem to say—the world is beautiful, but it’s terrible, too. Living is glorious, but we die. Unlike the elegy that focuses on the end of lives, the ode celebrates and contemplates living, but, of course, that means keeping an eye on the final curtain as well.

My first odes appeared in my book, *The Alphabet of Desire*, but I think I was writing them before I began to call them odes. I came to the ode through Keats and Neruda. I have always adored Keats’s long musical lines, and I love Neruda’s exaltation of the ordinary. I like to think of my odes as a threesome between Keats, Neruda, and me.

(Continued on next page)

After writing my first odes, I couldn't stop, and I wanted to know more. What is this human need to praise? What are its motives? The Romantics used the odes to question human mortality. Walt Whitman in his great ode "Song of Myself" gave voice to the eternal tension between mortality and immortality, and Allen Ginsberg took up the ode as he unlaced the social corset of 1950's America.

And the ode is still being written. There is Bernadette Mayer's "Ode to My Period" and Yusef Komunyakaa's sublime "Ode to the Maggot," as well as Kenneth Koch's autobiography in odes, *New Addresses* (2000). Sharon Olds published her *Odes* in 2014, both a beautiful book of praise for the female body and an investigation of aging. So the ode seems to be without end, a public exclamation of our most private thoughts. It praises, yes, but it asks hard questions, and embraces Lorca's duende. From the very beginning of consciousness and its expression in language and writing, the ode has been with us, forging a connection between the world inside us and the one outside, and I find it thrilling to be part of that four-thousand year conversation between my deepest self and that of human beings who have come before and those who will follow.

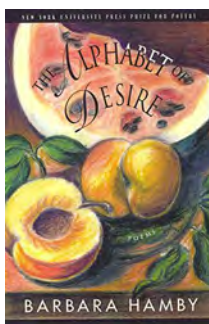
Rocheleau: Can you give us a rundown on some of the other books (many award-winning), that you've written or edited? It's a broad scope. What may have provoked their individual styles or substance?

Hamby: I started out as a free-verse poet very much influenced by Walt Whitman, Allen Ginsberg, Frank O'Hara, but also Sylvia Plath, T.S. Eliot, and Garcia Lorca. I struggled to find my poetic voice, but when it finally happened, editors of magazines let me know that I was doing something different. My dream publication was *The Paris Review*. Whenever I wrote something that I thought was my best, I'd send it there first, and when I got my form rejection, I'd send the poems to other magazines. Then one time, I got the upper level form rejection—"In spite of its obvious merit, we are returning these poems to you. Please try us again." I was over the moon. When

I sent the next manuscript, Richard Howard called me to accept the whole manuscript. These poems were in my first book, *Delirium*, which to my utter surprise won several first book awards and an NEA fellowship.



In *Delirium* I wrote an abecedarian poem, which I loved writing. I don't know if it was such a great poem, but I loved not knowing what was going to happen. An abecedarian is a kind of acrostic poem that goes back at least to the ancient Hebrew poets. "Psalm 119" is an abecedarian poem though much of its form is lost in translation. I didn't know that at the time, but I read about the form, wrote the alphabet down the left margin of a piece of paper, and the poem almost wrote itself. The form was made for me—I felt as if I were turbo-charged into a magic zone in which language and I were dancing our own special tango.



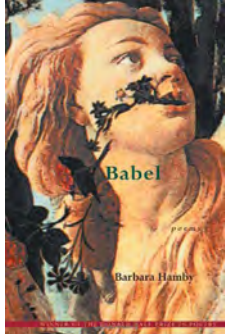
In my next book, *The Alphabet of Desire*, I wrote a sequence of twenty-six abecedarian poems, one for each letter of the alphabet. I did write about Hawai'i in this group of poems because Hawaiian is a k-rich language, and I needed the k's. I'm a list maker, and you can imagine the lists of words that I had for this project. I was in heaven. It was so difficult, but so much fun. You

[Link to books](#)

(Continued on the next page)

often read that we use only ten percent of our brain's capacity. Writing that sequence, I felt as if I were pushing my usage up to 27%.

In *Alphabet* I also wrote my first group of odes, or at least the first ones I called odes. I think that the poems that Richard Howard took for *The Paris Review* were odes,



especially the title poem, “Delirium” and another one “Nose.” This is also when I got interested in the history of the ode and started reading Pindar and Horace.

All of these obsessions came together in my next book, *Babel*, which won the first AWP Donald Hall Prize for poetry. The title poem is a double abecedarian, in which the first line begins with an A and the second one with a Z, weaving the alphabet until the last two lines which begin with Z and A again. The book begins with a sequence of poems in which the mockingbird is a central metaphor, and ends with a sequence of odes called “American Odes,” which are about quintessentially American subjects like hardware stores, bubblegum, barbecue, rock ‘n’ roll, cars. I was also working my way into a more formal way of writing—counting syllables and end rhymes. I often couldn’t make it work, so I’d pull the poems apart and make them free-verse poems, but at the end of *Babel* I was able to make the leap into a more formally rigorous kind of writing.



A lot formal writing is pretty constipated, but then a lot of free verse is boring. My guiding light in writing more formal verse was the Italian word “sprezzatura,” which means doing something incredibly difficult but making it look easy. I wanted my formal poems to have the freedom of free-verse but within my chosen constraints. My next book, *All-Night Lingo Tango*, was a result of this obsession. Almost every line in the book has 13 syllables and end-rhymes.

I had such fun with that book. One of the elements of sprezzatura was allowing myself to follow my wacky interests, travel, love of English vocabulary, words in other languages, love of Shakespeare, years of watching mindless TV, and following them places that I didn’t expect them to take me. One of my favorite poems in the book is “Mambo Cadillac” which reads like a wild misbegotten romance between a woman and a man. It was only years later that I realized that it was the wild part of myself talking to the tame part.

This was the book that I sent in with my application for a Guggenheim fellowship, which was for my next book. I had no idea that I’d be successful, so I’d already finished my project which was for my *New and Selected Poems* when I received the fellowship. What should I do with the year off and the money? I love train travel, and I love Russian literature, so I decided to take the Trans-Siberian railroad from St. Petersburg to Beijing. It took about a month, and the poems were tackling me in the streets. This was the summer of 2011. The next summer I wanted to take a Jack-Kerouac-On-the-Road trip across the US, but David had just gotten a grant to follow the Blues Highway from Memphis to New Orleans, so I jumped on his train. Again, the poems were jumping out of the landscape in front of our car.

One of the things I loved was how the Russian trip kept infiltrating the Blues Highway trip. When we went to visit Graceland, I couldn’t help noticing how many similarities there were between Elvis and Tolstoy. Both had hundreds of people visiting their houses—Graceland and Yasnaya Polyana. Both had favorite daughters and a bunch of yes-men hanging around driving their wives crazy, not to mention their sexual hangups. And, of course, New Orleans was a kind of homecoming.

I had two parts of a book, so what next? I love *The Odyssey*, so I applied for a summer grant from FSU to follow *The Odyssey* from Troy to Ithaka. Writing the application really made me investigate my process. Since scientists as well as humanists were going to be reviewing my application, I didn't want it to seem like I was trying to get money for a fancy vacation. I used Tim Severin's book *The Ulysses Voyage* to chart my course. We started in Istanbul and ended up back in Athens after going to Ithaka. I worked in visits to all the sites of the ancient games—Korinth, Nemea, Olympia, and Delphi—because of my love for Pindar's odes to the victors in those games. It was scary driving in Greece. There are no guard rails, and I'm terrified of heights, but the country and the people were beautiful. I even tried rewriting *The Odyssey* from the women's point of view. These three trips came together in *Bird Odyssey*, and then *Holoholo*.

Rocheleau: You have written many poems with food as a focal point. So let's add the art of cooking to that of poetry, among your various vocations. I enjoy your posts on social media featuring beautiful overhead photos of really succulent dishes and desserts that you have mastered; you seem to marry the visual sense to evoke other senses, like that of taste. Am I overextending to see that mix of the senses in your poetry, and that object to object, sense to sense, poetry goes everywhere for you?



Fig Tart



Nectarine Tart



Cherry Tart

Hamby: David says, "The poetry store is always open," and I think he's absolutely right. There should be no division between your life and your art. I often talk to students in conferences, and they tell me fascinating stories. I say, "That's a poem." Up to that point they haven't considered their stories as subjects for poems. Poems are everywhere. I'm working on a poem about conversation, and I read about "adda," the Bengali word for a free-floating conversation that can include politics, family problems, literature, the dog walking by the coffee shop, anything. Or I was watching the miniseries on Chernobyl, and the men were fashioning metal guards to cover their crotches, and I started riffing on the word "junk." Picasso said, "Inspiration exists, but it must find us working." Discipline for me is writing down everything that might be a poem and letting those little pieces tell me where they want to go. And yes, sense images drive a poem. Eliot said that you can't tell a reader how you felt. You have to recreate the world in which you felt something, so the reader can enter that world and feel it, too. It will never be your exact feeling, but it will resonate. It's all about connection. As E.M. Forster said, "Only connect."

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Rocheleau: Married poets, especially those who have accomplished so much in their art separately and together, is a natural subject for interviewers to pursue. In his work, David often reminds me of a fleet-fingered sax player, winding out wildly profound (and often uniquely funny) solos. To me, your own work approach is more often like that of a cellist, dancing along the constraints of a composition, obeying the rules of form while just slightly breaking them in your personal tempos and that stretching called rubato. What are the conscious and complementary differences in approach you may have both found remarkable?

Hamby: Sometimes people will say, “Isn’t it hard living with another poet?” To me it’s the best thing in the world. I never have to explain why I need to run off and work on something. He went on all those long trips with me and used them for his own poetic purposes. We love and value what the other person does. I had a friend in graduate school who was very good poet, but she married a tax attorney, who despised poetry because it had no monetary value. That to me would be like living in hell. Living with a poet allows you to talk about it all the time. That is paradise.

Rocheleau: Your work is brocaded with exceptional word and phrasal flourishes that remind me of Donne. For instance, you have no fear of interspersing classical roots with the directness of everyday things and description. An example in “Thus Spake the Mockingbird” with its “the duodecimo of desperate love”, while a few lines down “. . . where midnight slinks. I am the careless minx in the skirts of women.” You also carry an almost pianistic knack for complementing tones with your internal assonance and consonance. Many poets eschew such effects, but not you.

Hamby: When I was working on my first book, I wrote a sequence about Keats’s journey to Italy. As part of my research, I read Jackson Bate’s beautiful biography of Keats. In one chapter he described Keats’ love of Shakespeare his use of assonance or repeated vowel sounds to create music in his lines. I thought, “That’s something I’d like to try.” At first it was stilted, but after a while my brain understood what it was that I wanted to do, and it became more fluid. I think sometimes poets shy away from difficulty because the results are so horrible at first. I find that if you just stick with it, you can find your way.

Rocheleau: In your travels and sojourns abroad, what has that catalogue of time and event brought to your work and your life experience? Can you share an anecdote or two?

Hamby: We both love to travel. I like to plan the trips, but David has the most incredible facility with languages. He says his French is intermediate, but it has opened so many doors for us. The same is true of his Italian and Spanish. Even when we went to Russia, he learned phrases that made our way more delightful. He loves to eat, so a lot of his energy goes into finding restaurants and joking with waiters. He’s so good natured. I love opera, and he has cultivated an interest, too. We’ve been to a lot of the great opera houses. He also loves football, and I have never cultivated an interest in that, but he doesn’t care. What is a first down? I’ll never get it.

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Barbara at Stonehenge, Photo by David Kirby

Rocheleau: I know of your fondness for learning various languages and the distinctive play inherent in each. Are you currently studying anything new in this vein for yourself or a future project?

Hamby: I'm on day 790 of a Duolingo streak in French and Italian, and I'm taking an Alliance Francaise class on Tuesday nights. I'm hoping to go to Florence in May, and I have a fiction project I'm thinking of that's set in Paris. Other than that, I have no idea where I'm going. One of my passions is for words in other languages that we don't have in English. For example, in Swedish, there is the word "mangata" for the trail moonlight makes on water. And in Russian, "razbliuto" is the feeling you have for someone you once loved but love no more. The Bantu phrase "em-bukiem-vuki" is to tear off your clothes to dance. This became our "boogie-woogie." Isn't that wonderful?

Rocheleau: During the stay at Florida State, first as a student aspiring to an M.A., then as a longtime teacher, what are some of highlights and discoveries of each role you might pass along to current and future poets?

Hamby: I've been asked at parties how I can possibly teach someone to be a poet. My interlocutor is usually a scientist. I suppose for them, poetry is a mystical endeavor, and it is mysterious on a certain level, but every semester I see my students' writing improve dramatically, especially my undergraduates. One of the joys of teaching is seeing that happen.



What you can't teach is something I call "fire in the belly." I've seen really gifted poets give up, and less gifted writers stick with it and become really good. Recently I had a student who was just brilliant, and she worked hard at it. When I encouraged her to pursue an MFA, she said that her father wouldn't approve. A year after she graduated, she called me and said she was dying at her new job. She still wanted to be a poet, but there was her father. I suggested that she apply to various programs, just to see what would happen. I had fellow professors calling me asking me what they could do to get her to come to their programs. Finally, she got an offer from a top school that offered her a huge stipend. When she showed the letter to her father, he started crying. He said that he had no idea that something like this existed. And he was an educated man, a lawyer. Oops, that's the second benighted lawyer that has shown up in this interview. Is there a course in law school called, "Stomping the Poetry Out of Our Students?"

Rocheleau: Everyone reads into an artist's favorite things. So okay, how about favorites of yours, among artists and their works. If we take poets first (including those who may have influenced you the most here or there), who comes to mind?

Hamby: I talked earlier about Whitman, Ginsberg, and O'Hara. Also, Bob Dylan was a huge influence. I was one of those people who was thrilled when he won the Nobel Prize. He introduced me to Rimbaud. His "Subterranean Homesick Blues" is a masterpiece of rhyme. In the past ten or fifteen years I've immersed myself in ancient poetry and literature. I love the Russians. A couple of years ago, I was trying to learn how to post my classes on FSU's online program. My tutor was a Russian major, and pretty soon we were talking about Dostoevsky and my favorite of his novels, *The Idiot*. It was as if we were in love with the same guy. Her colleagues were looking at us as if we were out of our minds.

I'm teaching a class on the letters of poets starting with Ovid and ending with Ginsberg and Kerouac. I love Emily Dickinson's letters. My poetry is not much like hers, but I love it. I just



Emily Dickinson

(Continued on the next page)

finished reading Sylvia Plath's letters, all 2,200 pages. I love her bee poems. They influenced my sequence of bee poems in my first book. I love Anne Sexton's fairy tales. Pindar's odes taught me how form and freedom could work in a poem. Horace's odes are so calm on the surface, but are deeply passionate. Ovid's *Metamorphoses* are brilliant, and I love *The Odyssey*.

Shakespeare and Keats—who isn't influenced by those two? A *Midsummer Night's Dream* is a perfect piece of poetry as are Keats's odes. I've memorized "Ode to a Nightingale," and it teaches me so much about music, as do the soliloquies in *Hamlet*.

Rocheleau: As with David, music seems front and center, so what favorites here (besides poetry itself as music)?

Hamby: I love a lot of different kinds of music. When I was a teenager in Honolulu, I went to a lot of concerts. I saw Hendrix twice, the Stones, the Animals, and lots of other groups, but I also loved classical music, too, because I took piano lessons. Beethoven is a favorite. I love his piano sonatas. I have a box set of them on vinyl that I listened to for years. I also love Mozart, especially his operas. *Le Nozze di Figaro* is one of those perfect creations. The music is glorious, and the libretto poetic, but it is also subversive—overturning the class system but also making the women in the opera more powerful than the men. I love Puccini's *La Boheme* and *Tosca*.

I mentioned before that I loved Dylan. When I was a teenager I memorized all the lyrics on *Highway 61 Revisited*. I'd have to brush up, but I could probably recite "Just Like Tom Thumb's Blues" in a pinch. I also love Leonard Cohen and Joni Mitchell. They were the soundtrack of my twenties. When I cook, I love to listen to the Stones and Van Morrison. One of the top concerts of my life was seeing Morrison at the Olympia in Paris. Another one was Leonard Cohen at the O2 in London. We were walking down the street, and David said, "Would you like to see Leonard Cohen?" I thought it was a rhetorical question, but that night we were in the arena listening to him sing, "Famous Blue Raincoat" and "Hallelujah."

Rocheleau: Finally, visual artists, including the films you've bonded with over the years?

Hamby: Oh, that's a big one. When I was in college, I took a lot of art history classes. How's that for a career plan—poetry and art history? Those art history classes have enriched my life in ways I never imagined. I had the most wonderful professor—Patricia Rose—and I took every class she taught—High Renaissance, Baroque and Mannerism, the Northern European Renaissance and the History of Graphics. She really taught me how to look at art. When David and I went to Italy on our honeymoon, I took my class notes with me. Because of Florida State's study abroad program in Florence, we've been able to see the masterpieces of the Renaissance over and over. One of my ongoing projects has been drawing Donatello's David. When we're in Florence, I'll go to the Bargello and sketch for an hour or so. My drawings aren't good, but I love to really look at that statue. David has driven me to so many out-of-the-way places to see frescoes and paintings. I love Piero della Francesca. His fresco cycle in Arezzo is breathtaking. Caravaggio is another favorite. Many of his paintings are still in their original settings in Rome.

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Donatello's
David,
pen and ink by
Barbara Hamby

We both love film though David is more omnivorous than I am. We just finished Jane Campion's new film *The Power of the Dog*, which was great. I loved her *Bright Star*, of course, because it was about Keats. There used to be a movie theater in Tallahassee, The Miracle, that brought in all the art films. It was a sad day for us when it closed. We used to go to an early show and then discuss it over dinner. I'm working on a piece of fiction now with a character who is sitting in on a French New Wave cinema class, so I've been rewatching some of those. *400 Blows* and *Breathless* are two of my favorites and Jacques Rivette's *Celine and Julie Go Boating*. I'm looking forward to *Drive My Car*, a new Japanese film.

Rocheleau: Your and David's bond, as people and as master poets, must have grown, as great relationships do, into something very special. In fact, this appears already celebrated within your community and within our greater art. It seems to have been the lucky find of an internal and external oneness that radiates of its own observation and introspection. Can you share some guiding principle? And since we'll continue to be interested, what might your future yet hold, since we enjoy the shine we see?



Barbara and David, Photo by Catherine Husum Taylor

Hamby: I think we've been really lucky. In the beginning we had a lot of chemistry and a love of poetry. We still have that but we've developed other interests, especially travel, that have made our life together so rich. We get along really well at home, but when we travel, it's magic. I am great with a list and an itinerary, but David makes it fun. His high spirits elevate everything we do. He's always game, and he loves to buy tickets. When I want to go to a concert, he's already online buying the tickets. Love is such a mystery. Who knows why it works? I'm just grateful that it does.

BOOKS BY BARBARA HAMBY:

Holoholo (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2021, ISBN 9780822966586)

Bird Odyssey (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2018, ISBN 0-8229-6525-9)

On the Street of Divine Love: New and Selected Poems (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2014, ISBN 0-8229-6288-8)

Lester Higata's 20th Century: stories (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2010, ISBN 1-58729-918-6)

Seriously Funny: poetry anthology edited with David Kirby (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010, ISBN 0-8203-3569-X)

All-Night Lingo Tango: poems (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009, ISBN 0-8229-6017-6)

Babel: poems (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004, ISBN 0-8229-5859-7)

The Alphabet of Desire (New York: New York University Press, 1999, ISBN 0-8147-3597-5, paperback ISBN 0-8147-3598-3)

Delirium: poems (Denton, Texas: University of North Texas Press, 1995, ISBN 1-57441-002-4, paperback ISBN 1-57441-003-2)

Delirium

Just before I fainted in the restaurant that evening,
I was telling you a story about a madman
I saw earlier in the day
as I walked home from my ballet class
just off the Piazza Santa Maria del Carmine.
After crossing the bridge of Santa Trinita,
looking in at Ghirlandaio's frescoes
for the Sassetti family,
then wondering how many women there were
who were young and rich enough
to wear the see-through lace cowboy shirts
in the Gianni Versace windows
on the Via Tornabuoni,
at the intersection of the Via de Calzaioli
and the Via del Corso,
I walked into a hullabaloo being drummed up
by a bearded man who was stalking back and forth,
screaming something in Italian, of course,
and waving his arms in the air.
But when he turned he would reach down with one hand,
clamp his crotch,
and then pull his body around
as though his hips were a bad dog
and his genitals a leash he was yanking.
After each turn he'd continue stalking and flailing,
until time to turn again.
So I am trying to explain this and our pizza comes,
and I saw off a bite, but it is too hot,
so what do I do but swallow it, and it's too hot,
and I think, it's too hot,
and my voice decelerates as if it is a recording
on a slowly melting tape and the scene
in the restaurant begins to recede:
in the far distance I see the bearded man ranting
on the street,
then nearer but retreating quickly you
and the long corridor of the restaurant,

(Continued on the next page)

BARBARA HAMBY

POEMS BY

then it's as if I am falling into a cavity behind me,
 one that is always there, though I've learned to ignore it,
but I'm falling now, first through a riot of red rooms,
 then gold, green, blue and darker
until I finally drift into the black room
 where my mind can rest.

I wake up in the kitchen, lying on a wooden bench,
 with you and the waiter staring at me.

"I'm fine," I say, though it's as if I am pulling
 my mind up from a deep well.

The waiter brings me a bowl of soup,
 which I don't want, but it doesn't matter because
the lights go out and a man at the next table says,
 "Primo quella signora ed ora la luce,"

which means, first that woman and now the light,
 and it's so dark that I can't see myself or you,
and I feel as if I'm turning, a mad voice
 rising from my stomach

crying where are we anyway, and who, and what, and why?

~ From *Delirium* (1995)

Trigger Tries to Explain

Aw, Dale, he didn't mean it when he said I was the
best thing that ever happened to him. If he even said it,

chalk it up to the RKO publicity machine. I'm a horse, a
dead one at that, mounted in the museum with glass

eyes and looking a little ratty as the tubby former fans
file by with their bewildered bored kids, who are thinking,

Golden palomino, my ass, I can't believe he brought us
here instead of Disneyland, the boys looking like overgrown

insects and the girls like prostitutes in their halter tops,
jean short-shorts and platform sandals. It would have

killed Roy to see them, being such a goody-goody, always
Leonard Slye just beneath the skin with his Oklahoma homilies,

making everyone feel safe and sound. Oh, sure the big bad
Nazis were gone, but there were plenty of villains:

on the left the Commies, on the right the McCarthyites.
Poor Dale, you had a horse, too, what was her name? You were

Queen of the West until you gained a hundred pounds on fried
rashers, doughnuts, Wonder bread, and bakery cakes. Okay,

so it couldn't last forever. Get over it, Trigger, I tell myself,
television is fickle. Now it's hospital shows, blood and angst

undercut with tawdry sex. I blame the French, frigging cinema
verité. Where's the story, the hero, the beautiful girl?

Where's the horse? The other dead horses say, Whoa, don't get
excited, Trigger. Nothing's the way it was. That's the truth. Ah,

youth, I try not to be bitter, but sometimes I dream about
Zorro, now there was a guy who could make a horse look good.

~ From *The Alphabet of Desire* (1999)

Thus Spake the Mockingbird

The mockingbird says, hallelujah, coreopsis, I make the day
 bright, I wake the night-blooming jasmine. I am
 the duodecimo of desperate love, the hocus-pocus passion
 flower of delirious retribution. You never saw such a bird,
 such a triage of blood and feathers, tongue and bone. O the world
 is a sad address, bitterness melting the tongues of babies,
 breasts full of accidental milk, but I can teach the flowers to grow,
 take their tight buds, unfurl them like flags in the morning heat,
 fat banners of scent, flat platters of riot on the emerald scene.

I am the green god of pine trees, conducting the music
 of rustling needles through a harp of wind. I am the heart of men,
 the wild bird that drives their sex, forges their engines,
 jimmies their shattered locks in the dark flare where midnight slinks.

I am the careless minx in the skirts of women, the bright moon
 caressing their hair, the sharp words pouring from their beautiful mouths
 in board rooms, on bar stools, in big city laundrettes. I am
 Lester Young's sidewinding sax, sending that Pony Express
 message out west in the Marconi tube hidden in every torso
 tied tight in the corset of do and don't, high and low, yes and no. I am
 the radio, first god of the twentieth century, broadcasting
 the news, the blues, the death counts, the mothers wailing
 when everyone's gone home. I am sweeping
 through the Eustachian tubes of the great plains, transmitting
 through every ear of corn, shimmying down the spine
 of every Bible-thumping banker and bureaucrat, relaying the anointed
 word of the shimmering world. Every dirty foot that walks
 the broken streets moves on my wings. I speak from the golden
 screens. Hear the roar of my discord murdering the trees,
 screaming its furious rag, the fuselage of my revival-tent brag. Open
 your windows, slip on your castanets. I am the flamenco
 in the heel of desire. I am the dancer. I am the choir. Hear my wild
 throat crowd the exploding sky. O I can make a noise.

~ From *Babel* (2004)

Ode to American English

I was missing English one day, American, really,
 with its pill-popping Hungarian goulash of everything
 from Anglo-Saxon to Zulu, because British English
 is not the same, if the paperback dictionary
 I bought at Brentano's on the Avenue de l'Opéra
 is any indication, too cultured by half. Oh, the English
 know their delphiniums, but what about doowop, donuts,
 Dick Tracy, Tricky Dick? With their elegant Oxfordian
 accents, how could they understand my yearning for the hotrod,
 hotdog, hot flash vocabulary of the U. S of A.,
 the fragmented fandango of Dagwood's everyday flattening
 of Mr. Beasley on the sidewalk, fetuses floating
 on billboards, drive-by monster hip-hop stereos shaking
 the windows of my dining room like a 7.5 earthquake,
 Ebonics, Spanglish, "you know" used as comma and period,
 the inability of 90% of the population to get the present perfect:
 I have went, I have saw, I have tooken Jesus into my heart,
 the battlecry of the Bible Belt, but no one uses
 the King James anymore, only plain-speak versions,
 in which Jesus, raising Lazarus from the dead, says,
 "Dude, wake up," and the L-man bolts up like a B-movie
 mummy. "Whoa, I was toasted." Yes, ma'am,
 I miss the mongrel plenitude of American English, its fall-guy,
 rat-terrier, dog-pound neologisms, the bomb of it all,
 the rushing River Jordan backwoods mutability of it, the low-rider,
 boom-box cruise of it, from New Joisey to Ha-wah-ya
 with its sly dog, malasada-scarfing beach blanket lingo
 to the ubiquitous Valley Girl's like-like stuttering,
 shopaholic rant. I miss its quotidian beauty, its querulous
 back-biting righteous indignation, its preening rotgut
 flag-waving cowardice. Suffering Succotash, sputters
 Sylvester the Cat; sine die, say the pork-bellied legislators
 of the swamps and plains. I miss all those guys,
 their Tweety-bird resilience, their Doris Day optimism,
 the candid unguent of utter unhappiness on every channel,
 the midnight televangelist euphoric stew, the junk mail-voice mail
 vernacular. On every boulevard and ruel miss
 the Tarzan cry of Johnny Weismueller, Johnny Cash, Johnny B.
 Goode, and all the smart-talking, gum-snapping
 hard-girl dialogue, finger-popping x-rated street talk, sports
 babble, Cheetos, Cheerios, chili dog diatribes. Yeah,
 I miss them all, sitting here on my sidewalk throne sipping
 champagne verses lined up like hearses, metaphors juking,
 nouns zipping in my head like Corvettes on Dexedrine, French verbs
 slitting my throat, yearning for James Dean to jump my curb.

~ From *Babel* (2004)

Ode to Barbecue

We are lost again in the middle of redneck nowhere,
 which is a hundred times scarier
 than any other nowhere because everyone has guns.
 Let me emphasize that plural—rifles,
 double-barreled shotguns, .22 semi-automatics,
 12-gauge pumps, .357 magnums. And for what?
 Barbecue. A friend of a friend's student's cousin's
 aunt's husband was a cook in the army
 for 30 years, and he has retired to rural Georgia
 with the sole aim in his artistic soul of creating
 the best barbecued ribs in the universe and, according
 to rumor, he has succeeded, which is not surprising
 because this is a part of the world where the artistic soul
 rises up like a phoenix from the pit of rattlesnake
 churches and born-again retribution, where Charlie Lucas
 the Tin Man creates dinosaurs, colossi of rusted
 steel bands and garbage can mamas with radiator torsos,
 electric-coil hearts, fingers of screws. Here W.C. Rice's
 Cross Garden grows out of the southern red clay with rusted
 Buicks shouting, "The Devil Will Put Your Soul
 in Hell Burn it Forever" and "No Water in Hell," and I think
 of Chet Baker singing "Let's Get Lost," and I know
 what he means, because more and more I know
 where I am, and I don't like the feeling,
 and Chet knew about Hell and maybe about being saved,
 something much talked about in the deep South,
 being saved and being lost because we are all sinners,
 amen, we bear Adam's stain, and the only way
 to heaven is to be washed in the blood of the Lamb,
 which is kind of what happens when out of the South
 Georgia woods we see a little shack with smoke
 pouring from the chimney though it's August
 and steamier than a mild day in Hell; we sit at a picnic table
 and a broad bellied man sets down plates of ribs,
 a small mountain of red meat, so different from Paris
 where for my birthday my husband took me
 to an elegant place where we ate tiny ribs washed down
 with a sublime St.-Joseph. Oh, don't get me wrong,
 they were good, but the whole time I was out of sorts,
 squirming on my perfect chair, disgruntled,
 because I wanted to be at Tiny Register's, Kojack's,
 J.B.'s, I wanted ribs all right but big juicy ribs dripping
 with sauce, the secret recipe handed down from grandmother
 to father to son, sauce that could take the paint off a Buick,
 a hot, sin-lacerating concoction of tomatoes, jalapeños
 and sugar, washed down with iced tea, Coca-Cola, beer,
 because there's no water in Hell, and Hell is hot, oh yeah.

From Nine Sonnets from the Psalms

Hear my prayer, O Lord, though all I do all day is watch old black-and-white movies on TV. Speak to me through William Powell or Myrna Loy, solve the mystery of my sloth. Show me the way to take a walk or catch a cold, anything but read another exposé of the Kennedys. Teach me to sing or at least play the piano. For ten years I took lessons, and all I learned was to hate Bach. Shake me up or down. Call me names. Break my ears with AC/DC—I deserve far worse. Rebuke me in front of my ersatz friends. Who cares? They don't like me much anyway. Make me fat in lieu of thin. Give me a break or don't. I'm a hundred million molecules in search of an author. If that's you, thank you for my skin. Without it I'd be in worse shape than I'm in.

~ from *All Night Lingo Tango* (2009)

I beseech thee, O Yellow Pages, help me find a number for Barbara Stanwyck, because I need a tough broad in my corner right now. She'll pour me a tumbler of scotch or gin and tell me to buck up, show me the rod she has hidden in her lingerie drawer. She has a temper, yeah, but her laugh could take the wax off a cherry red Chevy. "Shoot him," she'll say merrily, then scamper off to screw an insurance company out of another wad of dough. I'll be left holding the phone or worse, patsy in another scheme, arrested by Edward G. Robinson and sent to Sing-Sing, while Barb lives like Gatsby in Thailand or Tahiti, gambling the night away until the sun rises in the east, because there are some things a girl can be sure of, like morning coming after night's inconsolable lure.

~ from *All Night Lingo Tango* (2009)

BARBARA HAMBY

POEMS BY

Some days I feel like Janet Leigh in *Touch of Evil*—
I wake up, sunny and blond, but by the time midnight
rolls around I've been hijacked by Akim Tamiroff's
greasy thugs, shot up with heroin, framed for murder,
and I'm out cold in a border town jail. I didn't kill
Akim, of course, it was Hank Quinlan—drunk, overweight
Orson Welles—who for thirty-odd years as sheriff
has been framing creeps for crimes they maybe did. Enter
Mike Vargas, tall handsome Mexican cop—Charleton
Heston with a weird little mustache and a dark tan
from a can. "You don't talk like a Mexican," Welles
says, which speaks to me, because I can see that talking
like a Mexican could solve any number of roadside hells
I am currently running away from—well, walking.

~ from *All Night Lingo Tango* (2009)

The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. I am
that Trinculo, wandering this blue-green island, drunk
in the company of clowns, waiting for a telegram
that will boost me out of my present jam. Oh, yes ma'am,
I'm in quicksand and thinking about The Mummy sunk
under a 4,000-year curse or is it Caliban,
skulking in the underbrush of my mind? What's this funk
that's grabbed me like a gorilla in love? If I can
shake-and-bake it into the next century, slam dunk
it into a Fed-Ex box, send it to Kalamazoo,
then maybe I'll be able to breathe, but that low-down skunk,
my heart, won't quit beating for Prospero and his stew
of thunder and magic, so I stay up nights and scour
the sky for Zeus, his bolts shaking the midnight hour.

~ from *All Night Lingo Tango* (2009)

Mambo Cadillac

Drive me to the edge in your Mambo Cadillac,
 turn left at the graveyard and gas that baby, the black
 night ringing with its holy roller scream. I'll clock
 you on the highway at three a.m., brother, amen, smack
 the road as hard as we can, because I'm gonna crack
 the world in two, make a hoodoo soup with chicken necks,
 a gumbo with a plutonium roux, a little snack
 before the dirt and jalapeño stew that will shuck
 the skin right off your slinky hips, Mr. I'm-not-stuck
 in-a-middle-class-prison-with-someone-I-hate sack
 of blues. Put on your highwire shoes, Mr. Right, and stick
 with me. I'm going nowhere fast, the burlesque
 queen of this dim scene, I want to feel the wind, the Glock
 in my mouth, going south, down-by-the-riverside shock
 of the view. Take me to Shingles Fried Chicken Shack
 in your Mambo Cadillac. I was gone, but I'm back
 for good this time. I've taken a shine to daylight. Crank
 up that radio, baby, put on some dance music
 and shake your moneymaker, honey, rev it up to mach
 two. I'm talking to you, Mr. Magoo. Sit up, check
 out that blonde with the leopard print tattoo. O she'll lick
 the sugar right off your doughnut and bill you, too, speak
 French while she dothe do. Parlez-vous français? Okay, pick
 me up tonight at ten in your Mambo Cadillac
 cause we got a date with the devil, so fill the tank
 with high-octane rhythm and blues, sugar cane, and shark
 bait, too. We got some miles to cover, me and you, think
 Chile, Argentina, Peru. Take some time off work;
 we're gonna be gone a lot longer than a week
 or two. Is this D-day or Waterloo? White or black—
 it's up to you. We'll be in Mexico tonight. Pack
 a razor, pack some glue. Things fall apart off the track,
 and that's where we'll be, baby, in your Mambo Cadillac,
 cause you're looking for love, but I'm looking for a wreck.

~ from *All Night Lingo Tango* (2009)

Ode to Forgetting the Year

Forget the year, the parties where you drank too much,
 said what you thought without thinking, danced so hard
 you dislocated your hip, fainted in the kitchen,
 while Gumbo, your hosts' Jack Russell terrier,

looked you straight in the eye, bloomed into a boddhisattva,
 lectured you on the Six Perfections while drunk people
 with melting faces gathered around your shimmering corpse.

Then there was February when you should have been decapitated
 for stupidity. Forget those days and the ones
 when you faked a smile so stale it crumbled like a cookie
 down the side of your face. Forget the crumbs and the mask
 you wore and the tangle of Scotch tape you used to keep it in place,

but then you'd have to forget spring with its clouds of jasmine,
 wild indigo, and the amaryllis with their pink and red faces,
 your garden with its twelve tomato plants, squash, zucchini,
 nine kinds of peppers, okra, and that disappointing row of corn.
 Forget the corn, its stunted ears and brown oozing tips. Forgive
 the worms that sucked their flesh like zombies
 and forgive the bee that stung your arm, then stung your face, too.

While we're at it, let's forget 1974. You should have died that year,
 or maybe you did. Resurrection's a trick
 you learned early. And 2003. You could have called in sick
 those twelve months—sick and silly, illiterate and numb,

and summer, remember the day at the beach when the sun
 began to explain Heidegger to you while thunderclouds
 rumbled up from the horizon like Nazi submarines? The fried oysters
 you ate later at Angelo's were a consolation and the margaritas
 with salt and ice. Remember how you begged the sullen teenaged waitress
 to bring you a double, and double that, pleasepleaseplease.

And forget all the crime shows you watched,
 the DNA samples, hair picked up with tweezers
 and put in plastic bags, the grifters, conmen, and the husbands
 who murdered their wives for money or just plain fun.
 Forget them and the third grade and your second boyfriend,
 who loved Blonde on Blonde as much as you did
 but wanted something you wouldn't be able to give anyone for years.

(Continued on the next page)

BARBARA HAMBY

POEMS BY

Forget movies, too, the Hollywood trash in which nothing happened
though they were loud and fast, and when they were over
time had passed, which was a blessing in itself. O blessed
is Wong Kar Wai and his cities of blue and rain.
Blessed is David Lynch, his Polish prostitutes juking
to “Loco-Motion” in a kitschy fifties bungalow. Blessed
is Leonard Cohen, his “Hallelujah” played a thousand times
as you drove through Houston, its vacant lots
exploding with wild flowers and capsized shopping carts.

So forget the pizzas you ate, the ones you made from scratch
and the Dominoes ordered in darkest December,
the plonk you washed it down with and your Christmas tree
with the angel you found in Naples and the handmade Santas

your sons brought home from school, the ones with curling eyelashes
and vampire fangs. Forget their heartbreaks
and your sleepless nights like gift certificates
from the Twilight Zone, because January’s here,
and the stars are singing a song you heard on a street corner once,
so wild the pavement rippled, and it called you
like the night calls you with his monsters and his marble arms.

~ From *One the Street of Divine Love: New and Selected Poems* (2004)

Elvis and Tolstoy Save the World

I am standing in line waiting for the bus to take me
 across the street to Graceland when Tolstoy shows up
with his white beard and peasant's garb, and I smell him
 before I see him, because let's face it, Mennen's speed stick
was not big at Yasnaya Polyana, but I recognize him right away,
 those big ears and the beard like one of the guys in ZZ Top,
and I say, "Lev Nikolayevich, what are you doing here?"
 And he gives me this mix of a stink eye
and What are you doing later? and says, "I need to talk to Elvis,"
 and I'm thinking, Tolstoy looked at my boobs?
and What's Tolstoy want to say to Elvis? at the same moment,
 and if one more supernatural thing happens, my brain
might explode, but we just get on the bus, sit down,
 and put on our headphones, but I can't stop thinking
about how much Elvis and Tolstoy have in common,
 as in hundreds of people standing in line to tour their houses,
and Tolstoy had a favorite daughter, Alexandra, and Chernov
 and all his celibate followers, and Elvis had Lisa Marie
and the Memphis Mafia, and there were Priscilla and Sonya,
 both driven mad by the great ones' sexual inhibitions,
so when we arrive at Graceland, which, contrary to my expectations,
 is not cheesy, but a middle class family home,
and the guides tell us to go through the house at our own pace
 but not to go upstairs, though that doesn't stop Tolstoy,
who heads right up and since no one says anything to him,
 I follow along in his wake, and he goes to Elvis's bedroom
without knocking or anything, and there's Elvis lying on the bed,
 but the young Elvis with his sad eyes, and Tolstoy says,
"Elvis, quit moping around. We have work to do." And I'm standing
 over by the closet trying to visualize an Elvis/Tolstoy project,
but Elvis tells Tolstoy that he can't help him. "I'm sad," he says.
 "My mama's dead, and she's the only one who really loved me."

(Continued on the next page)

“My mother just died, too,” I say, and Elvis’s head jerks up.
“Who’s she?” he asks Tolstoy, who shakes his head,
“I don’t know, some groupie. Forget her, we have to save the world.”
“What’s wrong with it?” Elvis says. “What’s wrong with it?”
Tolstoy’s head explodes and then comes right back together again
like some Krazy Kat cartoon, which gets Elvis’s attention.
“How long since you’ve been outside?” says Tolstoy. “I’ve been dead,”
says Elvis, but Tolstoy pulls him off the bed. “That’s no excuse.”
And I think, Groupie? Black Sabbath has groupies, but Tolstoy?
And if I were going to be a groupie, I’d be following Chekhov
around, because he’s my idea of a guy I’d like to spend time with,
but here I am with Tolstoy and Elvis, and both are as crazy
as rats in a coffee can, but for dead guys they’re moving fast,
and I make a note to amp up my morning walk
because I’m huffing as Tolstoy shoves Elvis into the pink Cadillac
and I barely make it into the back seat because Lev Nikolayevich
is gunning the engine, heading south on Highway 61 to Natchez
and New Orleans because as everyone knows that’s
where the world almost ended on August 29, 2005, when Katrina hit
the Gulf Coast like an apocalyptic medieval shit storm,
and when I look at my watch, the hands are moving backwards fast,
the Cadillac’s speedometer is moving past eighty,
a hundred, and we take off into the clouds, which are grey
as a Confederate uniform, then black, and Tolstoy
says, “We have to blast Katrina with our combined mojo, Elvis,
or New Orleans will be sucked into the center of the earth,”
and Elvis, says, “Jesus Christ,” and Tolstoy says, “No, man,
it’s just you and me,” and Elvis jerks his head backwards,
and says, “Who’s she again?” and Tolstoy shakes his head and looks
into the rearview mirror. “She’s going to write the poem.”

~ From *Bird Odyssey* (2014)

The Odyssey in Six Sonnets

I. Nausicaa

I was the girl who found him washed up on the beach
 like Burt Lancaster in From Here to Eternity
 only worse for wear. I thought he was a tree, a birch
 log covered with weeds, but then he moved—an arm, a knee.

I knew he was a man. Yoo-hoo—I called my ladies,
 and one ran back for help. Oh, my god, the stories he told,
 it was better than television or the movies,
 though they were thousands of years in the future. A bold

man he was, one I could see myself having a snog
 with and much more, but he was married, or so he said,
 and my father fitted him out with a boat and grog
 and gold, and that was that as the setting sun turned red
 on Poseidon's kingdom. I wish I'd left him to rot
 on the sand, algae around his throat, a lover's knot.

II. Circe

Holy moly, what a man! I had him for a year,
 and I got the good out of him, I can tell you that.
 I knew the gods, as soon as their hangovers had cleared,
 would put their oars in, nosing around when they saw what

was going on. They have some weird ideas about men
 and gods canoodling. I hate that bitch Athena
 with her helmet and double-D cup. I know she sent
 Hermes to warn Odysseus. I should have seen a

trick coming my way, but he was such a divine hunk
 of man. The poet says, Some women are strange feeders.
 My sister bore the Minotaur, but I was in a funk,
 had my fill of lions and bulls. I wanted a breeder

so when he left, I'd have someone of my own. Well,
 so I will. I said goodbye and sent him straight to hell.

(Continued on the next page)

III. Mother in the Underworld

Didn't I teach you anything, you dumb cluck?
 Never get mixed up with the gods: divine blood will suck
 the plasma right out of your veins. You were a sitting duck,
 my boy, Athena loves a man with a big sword tucked

into his belt. She is Zeus's daughter, for God's sake.
 And killing Poseidon's son. Well, you have a real knack
 for taking a wrong turn. Why didn't you simply whack
 him on the head, rather than put out his eye and mock

him as you sailed away? I was standing on the dock
 the day you left for Troy. It was as if the sun had locked
 its light away. Then we heard that others had come back
 and still no sign of you, my darling boy. The ticking clock

had run its course for me. Remember, I'd felt you kick
 inside me. I couldn't live without you. That's a fact.

IV. Sirens' Song

O men in your ships, your ships of carnage, our lips burn
 for your bodies, your hips, anything you want we'll turn
 our bodies to, whatever you want. The waters churn
 with the sea god's salt-soaked blood. Swim to us now, spurn

the ways of men, and we will carry you to the fern
 grottos of our island, deep caves of softest moss worn
 softer still by our skin. O ships of men, do you yearn
 for whips and chains? Yes, we have them, as well, we can clean

the flesh right off your bones, or if your body's ruin
 lies in another room, we will help you find your doom,
 peel back layers of love until you're left with the germ
 of your beginning—your mother's egg, your father's sperm.

O men in your ships upon the sea, our bodies burn
 for you, anything you want we'll turn into, we'll turn.

(Continued on the next page)

V. Calypso

I was sick of him if you must know—nine long years
of the missionary position and ram, ram, ram.
I showed him what I wanted, and he said only queers
did those kinds of things. I should be so lucky. Oh, damn

the man, the island, and the great gods. He'd been drifting
for nine days in the sick churning sea and looked like death
on a stick. Why did I pick him out of the shifting
waters? Who knows? I did. I'll let you do the math.

His tales were thrilling for maybe six or seven months,
then another Have-I told-you-this-one? introduced
a tedium that made this semi-divine sea nymph
want to scream. When he whined to be set free, I produced

a raft tout de suite. Not his story, I know. I could kick
myself, Penelope. Forgive me for sending him back.

VI. Penelope's Lament

No sex for twenty years except with my handmaidens
and myself, so when you turned up like a beggar man,
O I recognized you but needed time to trade in
my poor-widow persona for something more Charlie Chan,

you know, a razor hiding behind a cream puff mask,
irritated by my number-one-and-only son,
ranting about food and money, hiding sheep and casks
of wine in caves, so the suitors would be forced to run

away. As if they would. A more ratty shiftless bunch
of creatures would be hard to rustle up. My bad luck,
they wanted to be king. I'd thought of giving them a lunch
of strychnine. Then you showed up, a geriatric Huck

Finn. So be my guest, finish them off, then I mean
to poison you. O Ithaka is mine. I am queen.



ABOUT BARBARA HAMBY

Barbara Hamby is the author of seven books of poems, most recently *Holoholo* (2021), *Bird Odyssey* (2018) and *On the Street of Divine Love: New and Selected Poems* (2014), published by the University of Pittsburgh Press, which also published *Babel* (2004) and *All-Night Lingo Tango* (2009). Her first book, *Delirium*, won the Vassar Miller Prize, The Kate Tufts Award, and the Poetry Society of America's Norma Farber First Book Award. Her second book, *The Alphabet of Desire*, won the New York University Press Prize for Poetry and was published in 1999 by New York University Press. She was a 2010 Guggenheim fellow in Poetry and her book of short stories, *Lester Higata's 20th Century*, won the 2010 Iowa Short Fiction Award. Her poems have appeared in many magazines, including *The New Yorker*, *Poetry*, *American Poetry Review*, *Ploughshares*, *Yale Review*, and *The New York Times*. She has also edited an anthology of poems, *Seriously Funny* (Georgia, 2009), with her husband David Kirby. She teaches at Florida State University where she is Distinguished University Scholar.



ABOUT AL ROCHELEAU

Al Rocheleau is the author of *On Writing Poetry, 2010* (in bookauthority.org's list of "the top 75 poetry writing books of all time"); *Falling River: Collected Poems, 1976-2016*; over 200 poems and translations published in more than a hundred journals in six countries. He is also founder and director, Twelve Chairs Advanced Poetry Course (180 Hours) and the Twelve Chairs Short Course, both accredited by the Florida State Poets Association; lecturer, University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth, Emerson College, University of Florida, Oak Hammock Institute for Learning in Retirement, Florida State Poets Association, and Florida Writers Association; recipient, Thomas Burnett Swann Award, 2004; nominee, Forward Poetry Prize, U.K., 2018; participant in joint music-and-poetry compositions and public performances with Florida composers Keith Lay (2014), Benoit Glazer (2018), and Stan Cording (2021); immediate past president, Florida State Poets Association.



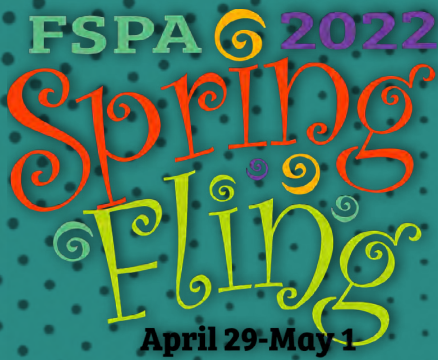
ABOUT PATSY

Patsy began her life living two houses down from us. Her birth name was Mallory Burton, and she lived with her sister Merlin and her brother Percy. The first time we saw her, we were returning from a trip to Chile. We saw Patsy and Merlin lounging on our deck. They jumped up, and Patsy looked at us as if to say, "Who are you? And why are you harshing our mellow?"

They ran away, but in the coming weeks Patsy started nosing around, and close behind was Percy, who is a big orange tom and quite the bully. However, even though Patsy is very dainty, she is a scrapper. She wouldn't let Percy intimidate her. Pretty soon I was letting her into the house so she could get away from Bully Boy. She started taking long naps on the couch. It went on like this for about a year, and then she just gradually moved in.

David is allergic to cats, but Patsy doesn't really bother him. We started calling her Patsy before we knew her real name. Her original mother, Patricia Burton, told us that Percy was the runt of the litter, so Patsy was in charge until Percy grew into his full tom-ness.

In our house Patsy is queen. We call her The Prettiest of the Pretty Girls, Miss Pretty Paws, Miss Spats, Cookie Wallenda for her amazing climbing skills, and many other silly names. David had a dream recently in which Patsy told him that she wanted to be called Pomposity Kindlewick, so sometimes we call her Miss Poms or Pompy for short.



Spring Fling is back!

Plan to join us in Orlando, April 29-May 1 at the San Pedro Center for informative sessions and workshops featuring Sean Sexton, a slam competition on Saturday night after our dinner and installation of Sexton as our newest chancellor. There will be plenty of member poetry reading/open mics and much more. See more information on the following pages.

REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Chapter: _____

or Member-at-Large _____ Non-Member _____

REGISTER

FEES

Member Registration: \$45.00....._____

Non-Members: \$60.00

(registration includes one-year membership in FSPA)....._____

Saturday lunch will be provided by FSPA.

Friday night dinner, \$18.00 per person....._____

Saturday night dinner, \$18.00 per person....._____

Those with dietary restrictions may bring their own meal.

There are rooms available at San Pedro Center. Indicate here if you will be staying 1 or 2 nights—\$100 per night._____

Total....._____

You have **two options to pay** for your registration:

1. Check or money order—send registration form and check or money order made payable to FSPA to:

FSPA

c/o Robyn Weinbaum, FSPA Treasurer
2629 Whalebone Bay Drive
Kissimmee, FL 34741

2. PayPal—go to <https://www.paypal.com/us/signin>

We are listed as FSPATreasurer@AOL.com. Please forward the e-mail receipt to FSPATreasurer@aol.com with registration form attached or with the registration information in the body of the email.

FSPA 2022
Spring
Eling

April 29-May 1
at
San Pedro Center,
2400 Dike Rd.
Winter Park, FL 32792

AGENDA

Friday, April 29

3:00-5:00pm

Registration/social...set up book sales

4:00pm

Guestroom check-in begins

6:00-7:00pm

Dinner

7:30-9:00pm

Member open mic

Saturday, April 30

7:30-8:45am

Coffee and pastries (provided by FSPA)

8:45-9:15am

FSPA Business Meeting and Event Introductions

9:15-10:15am

“Energy in Poetry” with Janet Watson

BREAK

10:30-11:30am

“Writing Limericks” with Marc Davidson

BREAK

11:45-1:00pm

Lunch provided by FSPA and Open Mic

1:00-3:30pm

Presentation/workshop with Sean Sexton

BREAK

3:45-4:45pm

“An Introduction To Poetry Slam”
with Kevin Campbell

4:45-5:00pm

Day’s closing remarks

Saturday Night, April 30

5:30-6:30pm

Dinner and installation of Chancellor

BREAK

7:15-8:00pm

Bar opens (purchase drink tickets)
and other guests arrive

8:00-10:30pm

Slam competition

Sunday, May 1

7:30-9:00am

Coffee and pastries (provided by FSPA)

9:00-10:30am

Critique Circles

BREAK

10:45-11:45am

Member open mic

11:45-noon

Closing remarks

We have a terrific lineup of speakers with a special guest, Florida's own cowboy poet and Poet Laureate of Indian River County, Sean Sexton.



Sean Sexton was born in Indian River County and grew up on his family's Treasure Hammock Ranch. He divides his time between managing a 700-acre cow-calf and seed stock operation, painting, and writing. He is author of *Blood Writing, Poems* (Anhinga Press, 2009), *The Empty Tomb* (University of Alabama Slash Pine Press, 2014), *Descent* (Yellow Jacket Press, 2018), and *May Darkness Restore, Poems* (Press 53, 2019). He has performed at the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Elko, Nevada, Miami Book Fair International, Other Words Literary Conference in Tampa, Florida, and the High Road Poetry and Short Fiction Festival, in Winston Salem, North Carolina. He is Poet Laureate of Indian River County.

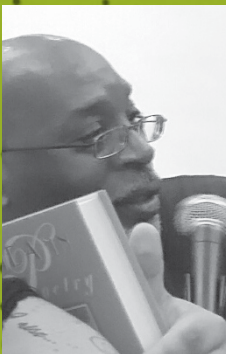


Janet Watson brings to her poetry what she observes and experiences in the fullness of everyday life. Her book of collected poems—*Eyes Open, Listening*, urges the reader to discover a similar awareness. She has recently published a novel for young readers—*Sons of The People*, in which legends of an Early Archaic people are told in poetry form. Her poems have won numerous awards and have appeared in many anthologies and journals. She is a charter member and past president of New River Poets. Born and raised in Ohio, Janet and her husband, Will, have four grown children and now live on five rural acres in Wesley Chapel.

SPEAKERS



Marc Davidson was born and raised in Daytona Beach where his grandparents and parents owned and managed The Daytona News-Journal. Naturally, Marc served as a reporter, editor, and editorial columnist in his thirty-seven years at the paper. He graduated from Florida State University with a degree in — what else — Asian Studies, because he likes Chinese food. He has published biographical articles as well as his articles and editorial columns in the *News-Journal*. His book, *Fit to Print: The Newspaper and the Poster*, catalogs an extensive collection owned by the newspaper. *Notable Wonders* was his first book of poetry. “Marc Davidson is keenly literate, a poet with an expansive toolbox from which he can create terrific lines. He’s a handy man to know” — David B. Axelrod, Poet Laureate, Volusia County, Florida



Kevin W. Campbell (aka NoirJente) is a resident of DeLand and an accomplished writer, poet and spoken word artist. He is the author of the chapbook, *Sadoto* (2014). He has served as Slam Coordinator of Mainstreet Art and Culture Slam of DeLand since 2014, and has served as Slam Coordinator of both the Florida State Poets Association and the Creative Happiness Institute since 2015. In his work as slam coordinator, he has helped facilitate the dreams of countless poets and writers in representing DeLand and Central Florida in over two dozen regional and national poetry competitions and festivals. Mr. Campbell is an activist and works closely with the board of directors of the African-American Museum of Arts of DeLand. Look for his newest poetry collection, *Ruby and Blood and Salt*, in the near future.

FSPA 2022
**Spring
Fling**
April 29-May 1

Florida State Poets Association
An affiliate of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies



Get ready for FSPA's...

Florida Slam!

Call for Florida's Best Spoken Word Poets



Hosted by Orlando Poet Laureate Shawn Welcome

Here is how it will work...FSPA's Florida Slam! will take place on April 30, from 8:00-10:30 PM at the San Pedro Center in Orlando.

We are seeking the best 12 contestants we can find in Florida. It will be a three-round event, cutting to six for round 2 and three in round 3. Shawn Welcome, Orlando's new Poet Laureate and well-known slam poet, will host the evening. Regular slam rules apply.

Poets should submit video or audio of a performance to assist the selection process. Free to enter. **Submit videos by March 15, 2022.** Send your sample video or audio file to mark@TKOrlando.com, limit one submission per poet; *sample cannot exceed four minutes in length.*

A committee of FSPA members and slammers will review the performances and select the 12 participants and 2 alternates.

The winner of the FSPA Slam Competition will receive a cash prize of \$300 and will move on to the national competition to represent FSPA. FSPA will cover their entry fee as well as the cost of their room and a stipend for meals (TBD.) There will be a \$200 2nd Award and \$100 3rd place award.

On April 1 we will notify who will be participants for the April 30th evening event during our Spring Fling.

Let's get slammin'!

FSPA's Florida Slam! Committee, Peter Gordon, Kevin Campbell, Shawn Welcome and Mark Andrew James Terry

SLAM

The winner of this event
will represent FSPA at
the NFSPS National Slam
to be held in October in
Daytona Beach

Sanctioned by
National Federation of
State Poetry Societies



FSPA 2022
Spring Fling
 April 29-May 1

Some more to know about the Spring Fling:

We want to make this a convenient and exciting opportunity for poets to gather safely together and enjoy expressing and learning about poetry.

The San Pedro Centre is Central Florida's number one retreat destination. With 48 rooms, five different conference areas, a chapel, Wi-Fi, 200+ acres of nature, a nature trail, low ropes course, 24/7 security, full house-keeping staff, lake access, docks, volleyball courts, soccer field and more, it is the place to reconnect with what really matters.

To make your room reservations, you may do that by indicating how many rooms and room nights you will require on the Spring Fling registration form. New this year, to make it easy and convenient for you, you will pay for your rooms through FSPA— so all in one! easy payment! And, bonus, there will be no tax to pay.

FOR POETS WITH BOOKS TO SELL:

We will follow the tried-and-true method FSPA has been using for the past few years on our book tables. On a 3x5 index card inserted **in each copy** of your book, include information in the following format:

AUTHOR'S NAME # of the copy & number of total copies that you brought to sell (example: #1 of 4, #2 of 6, etc.)

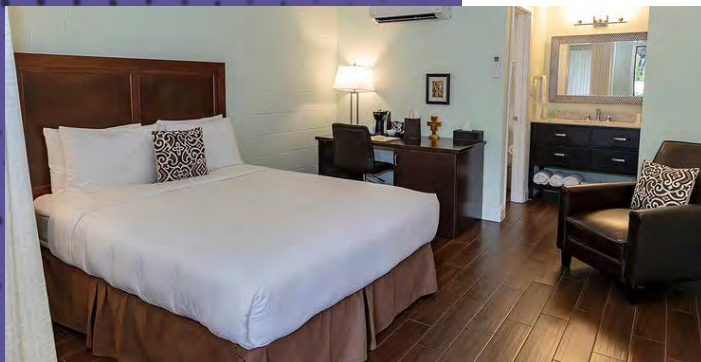
BOOK TITLE

PRICE OF BOOK

Cards are collected when books are bought, and the poets/authors will receive the funds remitted immediately if cash or check, or within 2 weeks if by credit card. Remember that space may be limited and there are usually many books to browse, so we recommend no more than a half-dozen copies of each book.



ROOMS



BLACKBERRY PEACH NATIONAL SLAM POETRY COMPETITION

DAYTONA BEACH SHORES, FLORIDA
MARRIOTT RESIDENCE INN
OCTOBER 20-23, 2022

SPONSORED BY
THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE POETRY SOCIETIES
WITH THE FLORIDA STATE POETS ASSOCIATION



TOTAL CASH PRIZES \$5,000

1ST PLACE \$2,000 ■ CASH PRIZES THROUGH 12TH PLACE

QUALIFY FOR THE NATIONAL SLAM AT FSPA'S
SPRING FLING SLAM COMPETITION

APRIL 29 - MAY 1, 2022

SAN PEDRO SPIRITUAL CENTER, WINTER PARK, FLORIDA

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE NATIONAL SLAM AND
ADDITIONAL WAYS TO QUALIFY FOR THE COMPETITION,
VISIT THE NATIONAL FEDERATION'S WEB PAGE AT

WWW.NFSPS.COM/BBPPS.HTML

ENTRY FEE \$150.00



FSPA First Tuesdays Monthly Open Mic March 1st & April 5th

Peter M. Gordon, the president of Orlando Area Poets, a chapter of FSPA, hosts each month. Peter hosted poetry slams and other events at some of our recent conventions. All members are welcome. We start at 7:30 pm EST and end by 9:30 pm. Everyone will have five minutes to read their work.

FSPA will not record the sessions or censor the poems. We do expect all readers to be respectful and understand our audience will be from different parts of the state.

[The link](#) and password are as follows:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87185894087?pwd=dIQ1NlNlJd-nNZRnFXQlB1T3lJRGk1QT09>

Meeting ID: 871 8589 4087

Passcode: 265288



Hosted by Peter M. Gordon

Cadence 2021:

Florida State Poets Association Anthology 39 includes more than 90 select member poems, winning poems in 26 categories of FSPA's national contest, and poems from the association's poetry chancellors. This year's *Cadence* is available from most online book sellers for \$12. Use the full title/subtitle to enhance your search. The name of lead editor Gary Broughman is also helpful.

Or, if you like, you may order your copies directly from Gary Broughman for \$12 plus \$4 shipping. Your check or money order should be made out to FSPA, and sent to:
Gary Broughman
725 Laurel Bay Circle,
New Smyrna Beach FL 32169

For more information:

email: chbmedia@gmail.com

calls: 386-957-4761





Join the **Zoomies** and other events – Always Free!

Maitland Public Library Workshops, led by FSPA Poet **Elaine Person**.

Writing workshops to improve your poetry and prose.

March 6	Sunday at 3:30 pm EST	Writing workshop	link
March 20	Sunday at 3:30 pm EST	Writing workshop	link
April 9	Saturday at 3:30 pm EST	Writing workshop	link
April 17	Sunday at 3:30 pm EST	Writing workshop	link
April 22	Friday at 7:00 pm EST	Coffeehouse (Theme: Grounded)	

North Florida Poetry Hub Poetry Workshops

North Florida Poetry Hub ~ Poetry Workshops

March 3	Thursday, 6:30 – 8:00 pm EST	Open Forum	RSVP
March 15	Tuesday, 6:30 – 8:00 pm EST	Poetry Hub	RSVP
April 7	Thursday, 6:30 – 8:00 pm EST	Open Forum	RSVP
April 19	Tuesday, 6:30 – 8:00 pm EST	Poetry Hub	RSVP

RSVP required. Please email Ruth Van Alstine at ruth@northfloridapoetryhub.org to receive an invitation with a Zoom meeting link. Please notate: (ATT: name of event/date in subject line) or RSVP on the North Florida Poetry Hub Facebook events page here: <https://www.facebook.com/northfloridapoetry/events>

Sundays' Poetry Critique led by FSPA Poet **Carlton Johnson**

Bring a poem to share, but only if you want critique. Sundays at 2:15 pm [link](#)
Please contact Carlton Johnson at ctj.32803@gmail.com

If you have a Zoomie you'd like posted here please send the information to the Zany Zultan of Zoomieness at mark@TKOrlando.com. You know you want to.

Tuesday, March 29
Time: 7-8:30 p.m.
On Zoom
With Shutta Crum
Get Published Using
Duotrope

Get Published Using the Ultimate Indexing Service: Duotrope

Join award-winning poet Shutta Crum for a walk through Duotrope, one of the handiest tools for finding publishing opportunities. Its indexing service covers many more journals than Poets & Writers Magazine (over 7,000!) and is more current. Since subscribing two years ago Shutta has had 22 poems published by literary journals, sold two chapbooks, and won a poetry prize.

Poetry ■ Memoirs ■ Fiction ■ Nonfiction ■ Children's Books

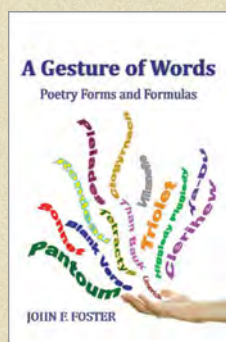
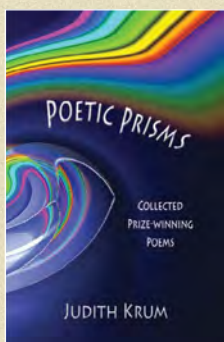
Designer and Editor
of *Cadence*, the
Anthology of the
Florida State Poets
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POETS: ■ JANET WATSON ■ JOHN FOSTER ■ PETER M GORDON ■ TERRY MICHAEL HAGANS ■ KATIE O'MALLEY
AL ROCHELEAU ■ SOPHIA DUROSE ■ NIKI BYRAM ■ JUDITH KRUM ■ NATALIE WARRICK ■ MARY ROGERS-GRANTHAM
DR. IRVIN MILOWE ■ ELIZABETH PLATER-ZYBERK ■ JOAN CLARK ■ AND MORE

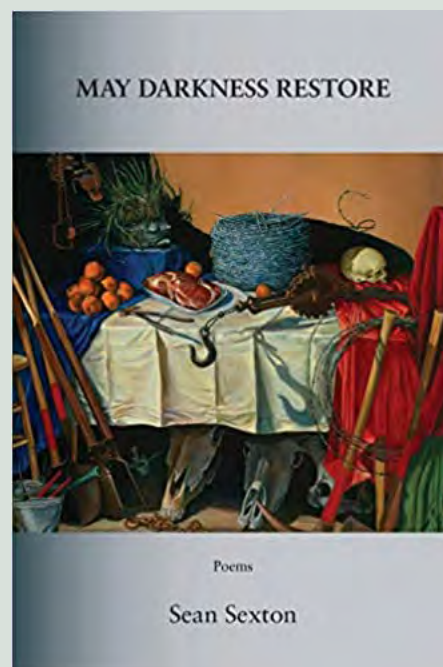
PUBLISHING ■ MARKETING ASSISTANCE ■ PROFESSIONAL WORK ■ FRIENDLY PRICES
GARY BROUGHMAN, PUBLISHER & EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Florida's preeminent artist and cowboy poet Sean Sexton reveals the poetry in ranching

Indian River Poet Laureate Sean Sexton's *May Darkness Restore* (published by Press53) "is a glorious book—Sexton's generous, unerring artist's eye finds extraordinary beauty in the often difficult everyday facts in the life of a third-generation Florida cattle rancher. He glories in the magic and alchemy of language and turns words and phrases like 'Rhizobium leguminosarum' and 'raggedy-assed tractor' into pure poetry. This book celebrates the beauties of generation, death, rebirth and love, and offers us all a share of truly redemptive grace."

—Sidney Wade, author of *Bird Book: Poems*

To purchase your copy, [click this link](#):



North Florida

POEMS SEEN IN PUBLIC PLACES



By Ruth Van Alstine

Every April Hope at Hand partners with a consortium of poets, museums, parks, and poetry enthusiasts to celebrate National Poetry Month with the only month-long poetry event in North Florida, the JaxPoetryFest.org. Last year North Florida Poetry Hub poets were able to be a part of the JAX Poetry Fest and display our poetry publicly.

As a part of JaxPoetryFest, a “Poetry Walk” was created, which comprised of approximately fifty locations in and around the city streets and store fronts in the Downtown Jacksonville area with poetry and art exhibits contributed by North Florida Poetry Hub members, other area poets and Jacksonville youth who had participated in Hope at Hand poetry classes. One part of the “Poetry Walk” was a “Haiku Wall” located on Laura Street and comprised of haiku being printed on signs and attached to fencing along the sidewalk as a display for passersby to enjoy.

North Florida Poetry Hub members additionally had poems printed on poetry sandwich boards, which were then displayed on city streets, including James Weldon Johnson Park during “Poetry in the Park” live poetry readings and the Landing Park on Riverwalk during Jax River Jams music concerts. Hope At Hand generously donated the signs to our Chapter for use at future public events.

North Florida Poetry Hub members who participated in the JaxPoetryFest 2021 Poetry Walk were **Chris Kastle, Shutta Crum, Howard Moon, Nuala Molloy Moran, Paula Babadi** and **Ruth Van Alstine**. Other local area poets included in the “Haiku Wall”, and whose poems are printed in this article, are **Michael Henry Lee** and **Antoinette Libro** from the Coquina Haiku Circle and youth from Hope At Hand poetry therapy sessions.

Hope at Hand is a nonprofit organization that provides art and poetry sessions for vulnerable and at-risk youth. Using poetry, creativity, art, and therapeutic approaches, they facilitate healing and personal growth for children and adolescents. Learn more at www.hopeathand.org.



The Hawk

Search the cloud dappled sky
To see the hawk.

It nests way, way up
On a tower of glass and steel.

In a changing landscape
Still able to soar!

~ Chris Kastle

Wings

Forehead pressed to pane,
Sweet rose-scented breeze
Brilliant ruby tones meld,
Shimmer a summers day.

Blossoms ripe to bloom,
Sparrow on the wing,
Monarch transforms,
Unfettered, flies free.

~ Ruth Van Alstine

Some words are too brittle:
Black-white
Let us come with words that hold
A soft and generous aboutness
In this space between us

~ Shutta Crum



isolation sought
while we mask humanity
on pandemic's face

~ Ruth Van Alstine

heavy cloud above
fragrance of sweet spring
showers
only a short splash

~ Chris Kastle

riverwalk
sharing the kingfisher's
enthusiasm

~ Michael Henry Lee

april wind
the birdbath overflows
with cherry blossoms

~ Antoinette Libro

seven girls in here
hopeful spirit for each one
smiles in a grey room

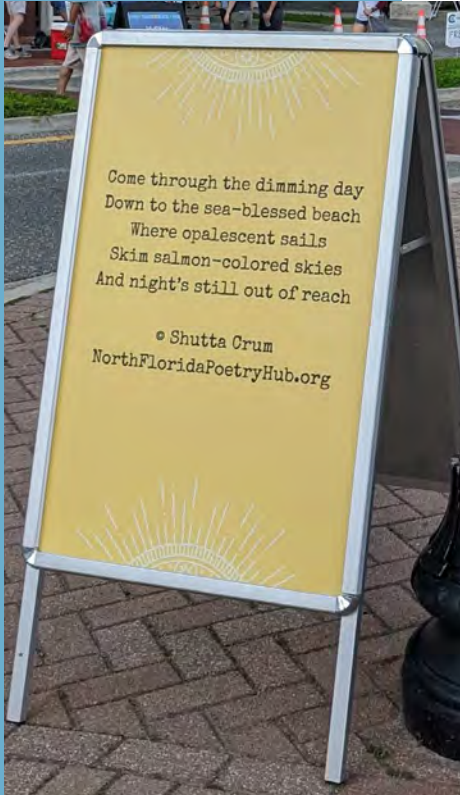
~ Group haiku with
incarcerated teenage girls
at the pretrial detention center
with Hope At Hand, Inc **

green meadow a flame
bathed in midnight sun
only ashes are left

~ Teenage girl in recovery
with Hope at Hand, Inc **

Come through the dimming day
Down to the sea-blessed beach
Where opalescent sails
Skim salmon-colored skies
And night's still out of reach

~ Shutta Crum



The Hope of a New Day

The hope of a new day
Does not begin at sun rise
It begins at the darkest hour
When the clock strikes midnight
The next tick of the clock
Signals both the hope and reality
Of a new day

~ Howard Moon

Chain Reaction

Your smile and your kindness
Is all I need each day
To make me smile
And keep me kind

~ Nuala Molloy Moran

Language Lessons
Stronger than limbs
muscled by the run,
faster than heart
quickenened by the race,
larger than branch
nourished by the Vine,
Love is made manifest
by this tongue of mine.

~ Paula Babadi



A Note of Thanks from the 2021-2022 Student Contest Chair

Nikki Fragala Barnes, MFA

In our overwhelming present, we are thankful there is poetry and young poets who breathe life and hope and revelation. We are thankful, too, for a community of poets and poetry-lovers who support the literary arts, especially via the Florida State Poets Association, along with our wider, extended creative community.

Throughout Fall 2021, I served an energetic network of young poets, teachers, and community judges with flurries of emails, and various other text mediums, in an inspiring exchange announcing the call for new poems, fielding questions, cultivating the inaugural undergraduate category, and conversing with our guest judges through the award stages. Now we arrive at the conclusion, and it is my honor to announce our winners and recognize our judges.

Looking ahead, we will open the 2022-2023 FSPA Youth / Student Poetry Contest in the fall to coincide with the academic school year and the start of the semester for undergraduates. We hope to expand our contest to include an elementary division soon.

Would you like to be involved with our contest? Contact Nikki Fragala Barnes via email: fspastudentcontest@gmail.com. Keep writing!

For the 2021 Youth / Student Poetry Contest, to be celebrated with publication in the 2022, Volume 41 of our anthology, *Cadence*, we will include these winning poems from students attending schools (public, private, virtual, and home) in Florida across three divisions: junior (grades 6-8), senior (grades 9-12), and undergraduate. Each youth poet will also receive a cash prize and membership in their local chapter of FSPA.

Junior Division | Grades 6-8

First: "The River" by **Sydney Spitzer**

Second: "Darkened clouds" by Nia Faciane

Third: "Window seat" by Olivia Sheftall

Senior Division | Grades 9-12

First: "renascence for the nascent" by **Rachel Xu**

Second: "Learning to use my words" by Kayli Bowen

Third: "The Library in a Hollow Dead Tree" by Amanda Callies

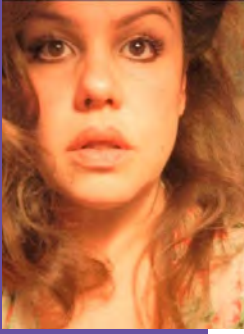
Honorable Mention: "Absent and Away" by Abigail Ehly

Undergraduate | Inaugural Category

First: "Camila" by **Camila Cal**

Second: "Icarus" by Carly Briand

Spotlight on our Guest Judges For the FSPA Student Contests



Linda Ravenswood, Junior Division, Grades 6-8

Linda Ravenswood is a poet and performance artist from Los Angeles. She is the founder and editor-in-chief of *The Los Angeles Press* (established 2018). A new collection, *rock waves / sloe drags*, is forthcoming from Eyewear London in 2022. Find her at thelosangelespress.com.

Judge's Statement: These poems from The FSPA Students reflect the broken, beautiful, hopeful, confusing, only-home-we-know world we've inherited. The work of the poet is to listen to that world calling. These artists' responses might live in service — uplifting others — inspiring people to be mindful, to approach every day with passion for living, even in times of so much strain on our communities. Your art will hopefully remind us we're not alone.



Sarah Clark, Senior Division, Grades 9-12

Sarah Clark is a queer disabled non-binary Native (Nanticoke) editor, writer, and cultural consultant. They are Editor-in-Chief of *beestung*, Editor-in-Chief at *ANMLY*, Co-Editor at the *Bettering American Poetry* series, a Co-Editor of *The Queer Movement Anthology*, and a member of Sundress Press's Board of Directors.

Judge's Statement: The winning poem for this year is an exegesis of modern life and modern strife, traced back through the nation's history and ending with an existentialist nod. This poet, as with many of our entries, makes keen use of language and craft to address the present-day issues, legacies, and feelings facing them as young adults. I look forward to seeing the growth that these poets will dazzle us with as they gradually leave behind the monikers of "youth poets," to join our ranks in full.



S.C. Watson, Undergraduate

S.C. Watson is a prize-winning poet and writer residing in Show Low, Arizona, and an active member of the Arizona Poetry Society. He holds a BA degree in English Literature from Brigham Young University and a JD degree from Willamette University College of Law. He is co-owner of the Baja Bad Press, a small, family-run publishing company, and the author of two poetry collections: *Baja Bad* and *Christmas Coventry at Fool Hollow: Poetry in Solitude*. He has traveled throughout Mexico, South America, and Spain, and speaks fluent Spanish.

Judge's Statement: It was an absolute pleasure to read, consider, and ultimately judge the poetry submitted for the Undergraduate Division of the Florida State Youth Poets Contest. Each of the several poets demonstrates considerable talent; and, their poems reflect a variety of themes, styles, and technical skills. I was particularly struck by the fresh imagery in so many of the pieces. And while the enjoyment of poetry is largely a subjective experience, these relatively new poets echo universal thoughts present in the vast, great conversation of world literature. Thank you for the opportunity to judge these fine works. They definitely deserve recognition.

2022 FSPA Contests are announced!

#1. FSPA FREE VERSE AWARD

Subject: Any. Form: Free Verse. 1 page limit.
1st PL \$100. 2nd PL \$75. 3rd PL \$50. 3 HM
Entry fee \$3 per poem for FSPA members,
\$4 for non-members. Limit 2 poems.
Sponsored by FSPA, Inc.

#2. FSPA FORMAL VERSE AWARD

Subject: Any. Form: Formal Verse.
(Include form name at top of page.) 1 page limit.
1st PL \$100. 2nd PL \$75. 3rd PL \$50. 3 HM
Entry fee \$3 per poem for FSPA members,
\$4 for non-members. Limit 2 poems.
Sponsored by FSPA, Inc.

#3. THE LIVE POETS SOCIETY AWARD

Subject: The Dark Side. Form: Any. 40 Line Limit.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by The Live Poets Society of
Daytona Beach

#4. TOMOKA POETS AWARD

Subject: At the Beach. Form: Any. 40 Line Limit.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by Tomoka Poets

#5. WILLARD B. FOSTER MEMORIAL AWARD

Subject: Food. Form: Nonet, Haiku, Tanka,
Etheree, Whitney, Ninette, Septolet, etc.
Line Limit according to form.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by John F. Foster

#6. THE RONDEAU AWARD

Subject: Any. Form: Rondeau.
Formal rhyme scheme, 3 stanzas, 15 Lines.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by Judith and Randy Krum

#7. JUNE OWENS MEMORIAL AWARD

Subject: Mirages. Form: Any. 40 Line Limit.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by New River Poets

#8. THE POET'S VISION AWARD

Subject: Any. Form: Any. 40 Line Limit.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by Janet Watson

#9. NEW RIVER POETS AWARD

(In Honor of our Deceased Members)
Subject: Any. Form: Any. 40 Line Limit.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by New River Poets

#10. ALFRED VON BROKOPH AWARD

Subject: Love, the good, the bad and the sad.
Form: Any lyrical. 30 Line Limit.
1st PL \$40. 2nd PL \$20. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by G. Kyra Von Brokoph

#11. HOWARD & SANDY GORDON MEMORIAL AWARD

Subject: Family.
Form: Any. 50 Line Limit.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by Peter and David Gordon

#12. JANET BINKLEY ERWIN MEMORIAL AWARD

Subject: Any. Form: Any. 40 Line Limit.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by Poetry for the Love of It (PLOI)

#13. NOAH WEBSTER AWARD

Subject: Any. Form: Lyrical Ballad. 2 8-line
stanzas, iambic pentameter, rhyme scheme
a/b/a/b/c/c/c/a. 40 Line Limit.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by Tomoka Poets

#14. KATE KENNEDY MEMORIAL AWARD

Subject: The Wind. Form: Any. 40 Line Limit.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by B.J. Alligood

#15. HENRIETTA & MARK KROAH FOUNDERS AWARD

(Free to FSPA Members)
Subject: Wedding. Form: Any. 40 Line Limit.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by FSPA, Inc.

#16. PAST PRESIDENTS AWARD

Subject: Any. Form: Any. 40 Line Limit.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by Past Presidents of FSPA

#17. CURRENT ISSUES AWARD

Subject: U.S. Politics 2021-2022.
Form: Blank Verse. 14 Line Limit
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by Frank Yanni

#18. ORLANDO AREA POETS AWARD

Subject: Behind the Façade.
Form: Any. 40 Line Limit.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by Orlando Area Poets

#19. LESLIE HALPERN MEMORIAL AWARD

Subject: Dreams.
Form: Any. 40 Line Limit.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by Orlando Area Poets

#20. HUMOR AWARD

Subject: Humor. Form: Rhymed & Metered.
40 Line Limit.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by Sunshine Poets

(Continued on the next page)

#21. MINUTE AWARD

Subject: Any. Form: Minute: 3 quatrains (or 4-line stanzas), 8 syllables in the first line of each stanza. 4 syllables in the remaining lines of each stanza, rhyme scheme: aabb/ccdd/eeff, strict iambic meter.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by Joyce Shiver

#22. CHILDHOOD AWARD

Subject: Children, reading, writing or both.
Form: Any. 40 Line Limit.
1st PL \$40. 2nd PL 20. 3rd PL \$15. 3 HM
Sponsored by Bookseedstudio

#23. WEINBAUM/GLIDDEN AWARD

Subject: Issues and concerns faced by LGBTQ Community and those who love them.
Form: Any. 40 Line Limit.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by Robyn Weinbaum

#24. THE ENCHANTMENT AWARD

Subject: Paranormal, Fantasy, SciFi.
Form: Any. 40 Line Limit.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by Sonja Jean Craig

#25. MIAMI POETS AWARD

Subject: Empathy. Form: Any. 50 Line Limit.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by Miami Poets

#26. EKPHRASTIC POEM – Writing Inspired by art. Subject: An Ekphrastic Poem inspired by a painting, photograph, sculpture or other piece of visual art. Include name of piece.
Form: Any. 50 Line Limit.
1st Prize: \$25. 2nd Prize: \$15. 3rd Prize: \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by the Elaine Person

#27. TRIOLET AWARD

Subject: Coffee
Form: Triolet. 8 Line Limit.
1st PL \$50. 2nd PL \$35. 3rd PL \$15. 3 HM
Sponsored by Mark Andrew James Terry

#28. SHERWOOD ROSS AWARD FOR HUMOROUS POETRY

Subject: Any satirical political or social subject.
Form: Free verse. 64 Line Limit.
1st PL \$100. 2nd PL \$50. 3rd PL \$25. 1 HM \$10.
Sponsored by Family & Friends of Sherwood Ross

#29. NORTH FLORIDA POETRY HUB AWARD

Subject: Hope. Form: Any.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by Hope at Hand/NFPH

#30. CHB PUBLICATIONS AWARD

Subject: Any. Form: Any. 40 Line Limit.
1st PL \$50. 2nd PL \$30. 3rd PL \$20. 3 HM
Sponsored by CHB Publications.

#31. THE LOOK DEEPER AWARD

Subject: Why you admire a poem (other than your own). Form: Sacred Seven—Starting at the left margin, take 7 lines from a poem you admire (not your own) and use the first letter in each line, in order, to begin each line in your poem about why you admire the other poem. Give credit to the other author.
Form: Any 7 Line Limit.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3 HM
Sponsored by Suzanne Austin-Hill

#32. THE JOSEPHINE DAVIDSON MEMORIAL AWARD

Subject: Any. Form: Ruba'i—4 lines, iambic pentameter, minimum 3 stanzas, rhyme aaba/bbcb/ccdc etc. Third line of final stanza must rhyme with first line of poem. 40 Line Limit.
1st PL \$25. 2nd PL \$15. 3rd PL \$10. 3HM
Sponsored by Live Poets Society of Daytona Beach

#33. MAE'S KITCHEN MEMORIAL AWARD

Subject: Cooking/Baking/Family Gathering.
Form: Any. 40 Line Limit.
1st PL \$35. 2nd PL \$25. 3rd PL \$20. 3 HM \$5 each.
Sponsored by Tim Schulz

#34. MILLIE'S GARDEN AWARD

Subject: butterfly/hummingbird/flower garden.
Form: Any. 40 Line Limit.
1st PL \$35. 2nd PL \$25. 3rd PL \$20. 3 HM \$5 each.
Sponsored by Tim Schulz

#35. NATURAL FLORIDA AWARD

Subject: The Wild West of the St. Johns River
Form: Any. 14 Line Limit.
1st PL \$50. 2nd PL \$30. 3rd PL \$20. 3 HM
Sponsored by Mark Andrew James Terry

#36. SOUTH FLORIDA POETS AWARD

Subject: Barbie. Denise Duhamel's book, KINKY, turns 25 on 3/1/22. This contest celebrates Duhamel and KINKY. Write your own Barbie poem. Happy Birthday, KINKY! Form: Any. 40 Line Limit.
1st PL \$100. 2nd PL \$50. 3rd PL \$25. 3 HM
Sponsored by Dustin Brookshire

(Continued on the next page)

FSPA Contests Submissions: May 1- July 15, 2021

FSPA CONTEST RULES:

Please read carefully and follow all directions. Any violations will disqualify submission.

1. ALL POEMS MUST:

- be the original work of the poet
- be unpublished in any form
- not have won more than \$10 in any contest
- be written in English
- be titled unless a senryu or haiku
- have a 40 lines limit unless stated otherwise
- not be simultaneously entered in any other contest

2. CATEGORY SPECIFICS:

- The same poem must not be entered in more than one category.
- Categories 1 & 2 are limited to 2 entries per category per poet.
- Categories 3 through 34 are limited to one entry per category per poet.

3. FORMAT:

- Typed, single-spaced on one side of 8.5" x 11" white paper. No illustrations.
- Submit 2 copies – both with category name and number on upper left.
- Poet's name, address, phone and email on duplicate copy only on upper right.
- Mail all entries together in one envelope with check or money order payable to FSPA, Inc. using regular first class mail.

4. FEES:

- Categories 1 & 2 are \$3 per poem for FSPA members, \$4 for non-members (2 poem limit per category).
- Category 15 is free to FSPA members only – non-members pay \$3.00.
- Remaining categories are \$2 each per contest for FSPA members and \$3 each per contest for non-members. Please do not send cash. Send your checks or money orders payable to FSPA, Inc.

5. PUBLISHING RIGHTS:

- Poets give FSPA, Inc. exclusive first printing rights to all 1st place winning poems awarded in the FSPA, Inc. Annual Contest.
- 1st Place winning poems will be printed in the FSPA anthology.
- The Editor reserves the right to alter line breaks of more than 50 characters per line, including spaces.
- Printing rights revert to the poet after the anthology is published (October 2022)

SUBMISSION PERIOD:

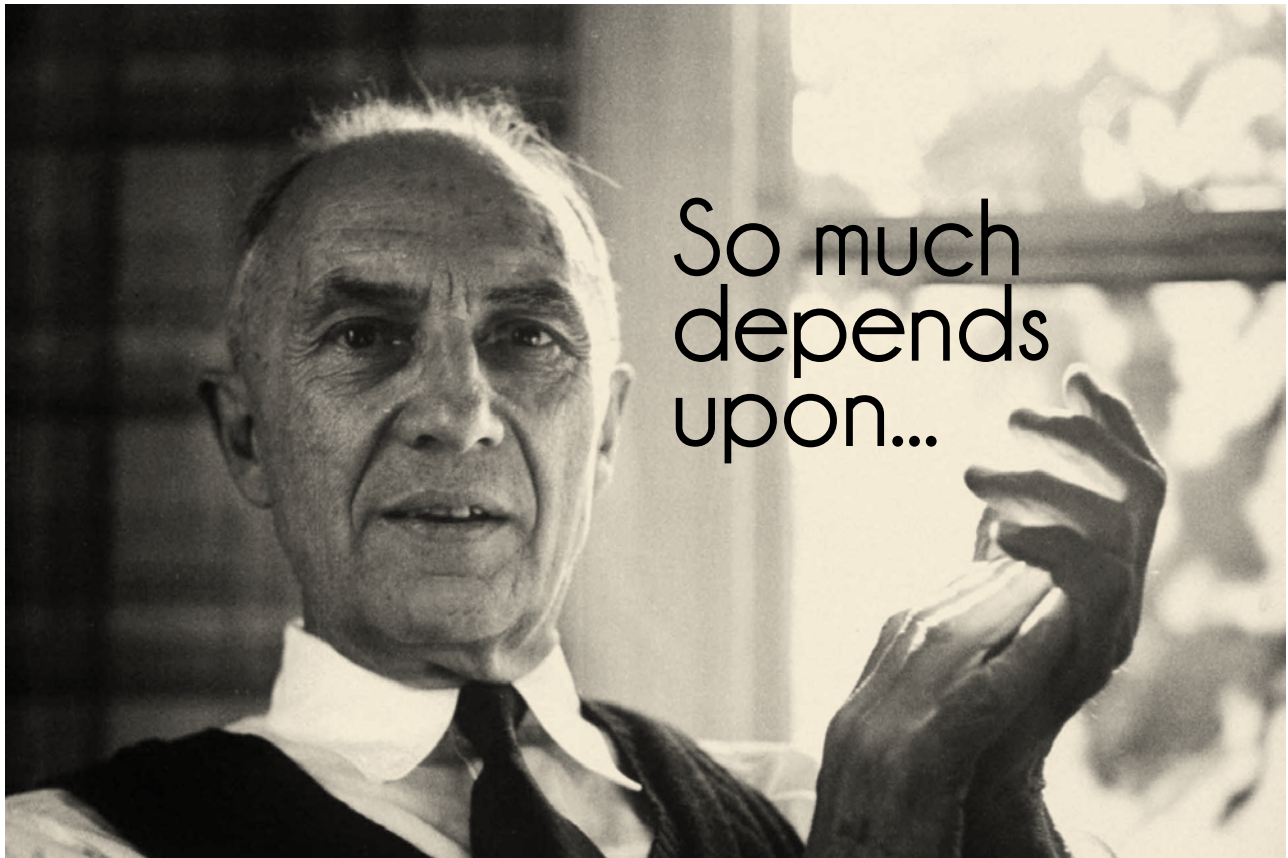
- May 1 to July 15, 2022
- July 15, 2022 is the "Postmarked By" deadline. FSPA will not be responsible for errors of delivery by the Post Office. We will acknowledge receipt of your entries as we receive them. If you do not receive a timely acknowledgement, contact us immediately at flueln@hotmail.com.

MAIL ENTRIES TO:

Marc Davidson
PO Box 730838, Ormond Beach, FL 32173
Winners' names will be posted October 2022 on the FSPA website.



Marc Davidson
FSPA Contest Committee Chair



So much
depends
upon...

By Marc Davidson

Into the great melting pot that is America went an Englishman raised in the Dominican Republic and a Puerto Rican woman of French extraction. This union brought to the scene a young boy, born in 1883 in Rutherford, New Jersey. This lad's parents spoke Spanish at home, so it became his first language, and the Caribbean upbringing of his parents meant that his life was much influenced by its multi-cultural foundation.

William Carlos Williams received his ordinary education in Rutherford, then was sent to schools in Europe, until returning to school in New York. By special tests he was admitted to the University of Pennsylvania Medical School. He completed his medical education there and in Leipzig, Germany, and did his internships at several noted hospitals in New York City. He embarked on his life-long career as a family doctor and pediatric specialist.

And all the while he was writing poetry. His first book "Poems" was published in 1909 while he was still studying medicine, and his second book "The Tempers" in 1913, shortly after his marriage and before the birth of his first son.

Williams' career in medicine seems almost like a sideline when you consider the enormous outburst of artistic creativity in his life. He was a successful poet, and also wrote plays, essays, short stories, novels and even the libretto for an opera about the career of George Washington. He had a fascination for painting and maintained

(Continued on the next page)

a close relationship with several painters including Marsden Hartley and Charles Demuth, with whom Williams developed close friendships. Among his literary friendships he included Ezra Pound.

Williams' style was founded in Modernism – a movement which reflected a desire for the creation of new forms of art, philosophy, and social organization which reflected the newly emerging industrial world. He also was very much an Imagist, a style that favored precision of imagery and clear, sharp language.

His poem, *The Red Wheelbarrow* is a perfect example of Imagism:

“so much depends
upon

a red wheel
barrow

glazed with rain
water

beside the white
chickens.”

– *Spring and All* (1923)



Williams' style in poetic expression soon diverged from that of his former friends, and he spent much of his life in rounds of criticism, each picking holes in the others work. He was especially critical of T.S. Eliot's "The Wasteland" as a poem which set back the goals of modernism.

Williams saw his poetic project as a distinctly American one; he sought to renew language through the fresh, raw idiom that grew out of America's cultural and social heterogeneity, at the same time freeing it from what he saw as the worn-out language of British and European culture. "No one believes that poetry can exist in his own life," Williams said. "The purpose of an artist, whatever it is, is to take the life, whatever he sees, and to raise it up to an elevated position where it has dignity."

He experimented with what he called the "variable foot" in an attempt to break away from older and more confining rhythms, and also with the "triadic line break" – a system of breaking one longer line into three lines. He expressed the viewpoint that poetry was essential to life most famously in a line from his poem "Asphodel, That Greeny Flower" (1955) in which he wrote:

(Continued on the next page)

It is difficult
to get the news from poems
yet men die miserably every day
for lack
of what is found there.

Williams loved painting and had painted under his mother's tutelage in his youth. He once said "I'd like to have been a painter, and it would have given me at least as great a satisfaction as being a poet." He worked with several painters and derived many poems from their work. One notable example is the painter Charles Demuth, whose painting "Tuberoses" (1922) he owned, which inspired his poem "The Pot of Flowers" (1923). The situation reversed itself with his poem "The Great Figure" (1921) which inspired Demuth to paint "I saw the Figure 5 in Gold" (1928).

The Great Figure

Among the rain
and lights
I saw the figure 5
in gold
on a red
firetruck
moving
tense
unheeded
to gong clangs
siren howls
and wheels rumbling
through the dark city.

Williams received many honors for his work later in life, including the first National Book Award for poetry in 1950, and the Bollingen Prize from Yale University in 1953. He was named Poetry Consultant to the Library of Congress, but barred from taking up the post by unfounded accusations of communism.

Williams suffered a heart attack in 1948, and after 1949, a series of strokes. Severe depression after one such stroke caused him to be confined to Hillside Hospital, New York, for four months in 1953. He died on March 4, 1963, at age 79 at his home in Ruthersford. He was buried in Hillside Cemetery in Lyndhurst, New Jersey.

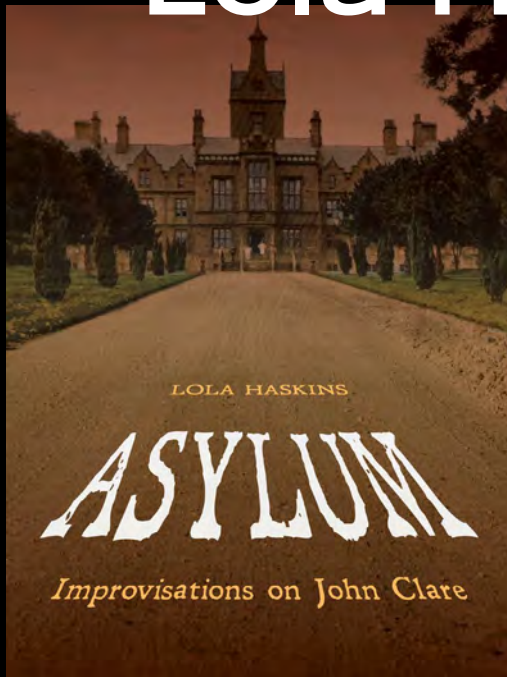
Shortly after his death he received a posthumous Pulitzer Prize and the Gold Medal for Poetry of the National Institute of Arts and Letters.

Altogether, Williams published 21 books of poems and countless prose works, including three translations of novels from French and Spanish authors. His great creative spirit leaves us to contemplate a red wheelbarrow and its meaning.



*I saw the figure 5 in gold. Charles Demuth 1928.
Metropolitan Museum of Art*

Lola Haskins Poetry

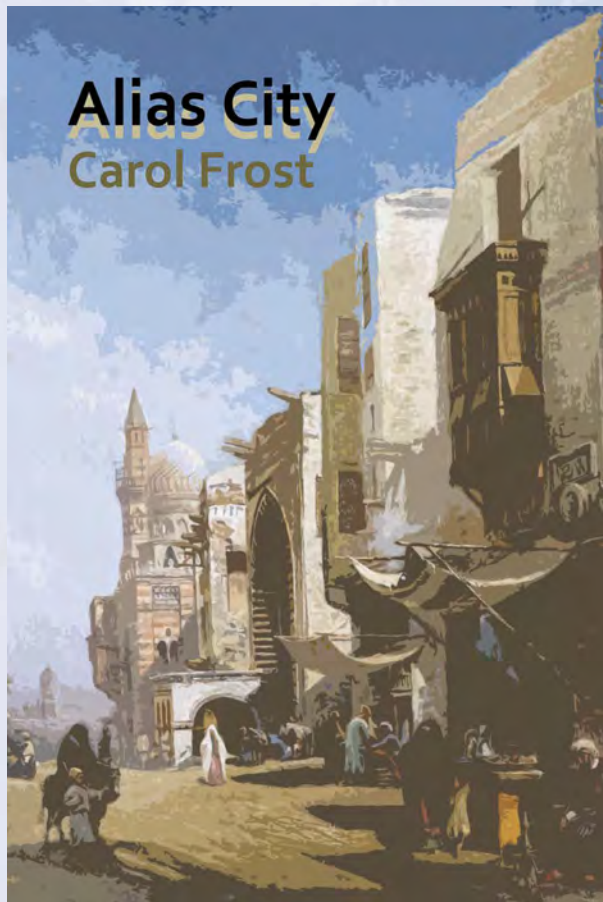


Published by University of Pittsburgh Press

Asylum presents the journey John Clare might have taken in 1841 if, when he escaped the madhouse, he'd been traveling in his head rather than on his feet. Ms. Haskins starts out with as little sense of direction as Clare had yet, after wandering all over the map, she too finally reaches home. The book's four sections are where she rests for the night. The first is a tender look at life and death. The second paints the world through which she walks. The third digresses to the supernatural and in the process is laugh-out-loud funny. In the fourth, she arrives in her dear north-west England, having learned from Clare that she too can be happy anywhere.

Now available on Amazon — [Click here.](#)

[Learn more at lolahaskins.com](http://lolahaskins.com)



Alias City by Carol Frost

Now available from MADHAT PRESS



Welcome to Carol Frost's *Alias City*, which is, in the best sense of both words, the city of music.... But it is also a great city of the mind.... The hero of this book is a refugee, a survivor of World War II. She is now losing her memory, trying to recount what happened, giving us brief glimpses into the darkness known as history ... and the healing known as the natural world, of pigeons, doves, and the comic, ridiculous humans. Herein, she remembers the flight, the terror, and the cities torn in two....

—ILYA KAMINSKY, author of *Deaf Republic*

Order at:

madhat-press.com/products/alias-city-by-carol-frost

“Most working poets are maybe 5% to 10% away from their ultimate potential: able to write uniformly fine work and to get published everywhere they deserve, and often. That’s what the Twelve Chairs course is for.” ~ Al Rocheleau

**Free
Month
Trial
of
FSPA’s
Twelve
Chairs
Short
Course**

We are offering our Twelve Chairs Short Course on a free, one-month trial period, so you can experience the benefits of this powerful poetry course at your leisure.

The Short Course was derived from the scripts, recordings, and voluminous handouts of the 180-hour Advanced Course, distilling the copious instruction of that larger course into a sequential stream of short aphorisms and maxims, such as:

THE POET’S TRIANGLE CONSISTS OF: CRAFT, SCOPE, AND VOICE
WE ACQUIRE THEM IN SEQUENCE; EACH SUPPORTS EACH
OBJECTS AND THEIR MOVEMENTS DRIVE YOUR POEM
A PERFECT OBJECT IS DEFINED BY THE CLEAREST WORD
THE OBJECT ITSELF CAN BE FOUND AT THE ROOT OF ITS WORD
MORE THAN ANYTHING, POETS AND POEMS SAY SOMETHING
SENSE AND OBERVATION MAKE QUESTIONS AND/OR ANSWERS
THOUGHT OR EMOTION, SMALL OR GREAT, MAKES UP YOUR TAKE
POEMS BUILD NOT WITH A SUBJECT, BUT WITH A TAKE

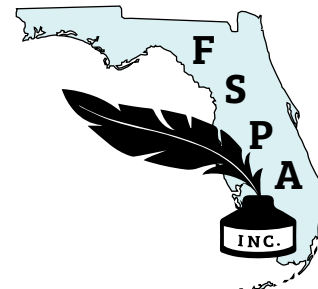
That’s just a taste of the Short Course; but are you intrigued? Now you can try the course out at home, free. FSPA is offering a one-month trial of the accredited Twelve Chairs Course on a flash-drive, compatible with any computer system.

The drives contain the full Short Course along with all course handouts. After one month, if you are enjoying the course and its benefits, simply send in your \$50 payment. If you are not happy with the course, you can return it. No obligation.

To obtain your free trial month, simply email Robyn Weinbaum at FSPATreasurer@Aol.com

or mail your request to:

Robyn Weinbaum, FSPA Treasurer
2629 Whalebone Bay Drive
Kissimmee, FL 34741





Charles Hazelip

Photography by Nicole Myhre

Charles Hazelip was born in Baltimore, Maryland in 1933. He graduated from Florida Southern College with a bachelor's degree in Fine Arts in 1955. Subsequently he accepted a commission in the US Army, a decision that led to a 22-year career as a Military Police officer and retirement as a Lieutenant Colonel. Following this event, he enrolled in Florida State University, earning a PhD in Criminology in 1980. He accepted a position in the Bureau of Planning and Research in the Florida Department of Corrections. During this employment he was also an adjunct professor in Criminal Justice in the off-campus program of Florida A & M University.

Upon retiring from state employment in 1998 he fulfilled his longtime desire to pursue art, principally oil and acrylic painting. This path led him to be hired by the Tallahassee Senior Center to instruct seniors in the disciplines, which he did for 14 years. His artwork has appeared in art galleries in Florida and Georgia, where he is a member of the Wiregrass Art Gallery in Thomasville.

His interest in poetry began as a freshman in college, however he had only “dabbled” with that art sporadically. Later he organized a small group of poetry-interested seniors that became Poetry for The Love of It, a chapter of Florida State Poets Association in 2011. Charles has authored six books of poetry and prose, the most recent of which are *Good Things Good People Ponder* (2020), *Favorite Verses by Art Charly* (2020) and *Mutterings of a Meandering Mind* (2021); all six are available at Amazon. He perceives a natural connection between poetry and art. “They both express in different ways an individual's concepts of life. When either writing a poem or doing a painting the creator seeks how best to reach a reader or viewer with the message of the work. To accomplish this is the reward in both disciplines.”

CHARLES HAZELIP

POEMS BY

Meditation in a Garden

How differ flowers and weeds?
Don't they all, like siblings,
feed off Mother Earth?
Are not all root, leaf and stem?

Why canonize a rambling rose,
but curse kudzu
when it grows over trees?
Did an ancient
horticulturist once decree
roses are better than vines?
And did we all agree?

Some people we treat
like flowers or weeds,
protecting or rejecting,
often by sight alone.

We look down on those
who seek no home;
who live outrageously,
like Nut Grass
sprouting in the cracks
of our manicured sidewalks.

Are we right to weed them out
and haul them away,
like dollar-weeds pulled
from our rose beds?

Is their pesky
and predictable return
just proof they too
are worthy plants?

Could this be all
they ask of us to learn?

My Quilting Wife (For Faith)

To me creative work is therapy,
a safe place where I've always thrived.
Images of home in any man's eye ought
give good reasons to be alive.

In careers demanding long hours
stressful events may often turn sour.
In times I've encountered fretful strife,
I think of my quietly quilting wife.

When troubles delay productive work,
or human frailty serves to irk,
I focus on blessings in all ways right
By finding my quietly quilting wife.

At home I'll find a sound serene,
her humming at a sewing machine.
I forget the irksome trials of life
and kiss my quietly quilting wife.

Golden Wolf

Golden Wolf once left his gilded lair
seeking more riches and greater acclaim.
Aware he could profit by spreading fear,
he roared to draw victims feeling despair,
like feckless wolves fearing changing times.

Golden Wolf, away from his gilded lair
spouted his hatred, all meant to declare
that lesser wolves must follow his line.
He knew profit lay in stoking fears
of other cohorts whom he may define.

For these lesser wolfpacks he feigned to care,
convincing them he was one of their kind.
With Golden Wolf, prowling far from his lair,
packs of lesser wolves, caught in his snares,
eagerly pursued his intolerant line.

He knew by growling his whining fears,
like bitter water, his façade of care
would wash out civil discourse in time.
Then Golden Wolf smiled in his new gilded lair
observing how fear made profits sublime.

CHARLES HAZELIP

POEMS BY

Ruling What?

I sat at my desk with no idea what to write.
All angst, disgusting negativity and
disappointing low-brow incivility of the
most depressing election I've voted in
during my long life closed my mind.

I assured myself myriad poems will
arise from ashes of electoral fiasco.
But there I sat, eyes meandering over
familiar clutter in my office.
I did so often, seeking nubs of ideas
waiting to spring into verse.

My eyes happened to find my coffee cup
resting on the desk near my side.
It's a white cup, larger than average,
a gift from a daughter years ago.
Just a big white cup, unmentionable but
for the: image and slogan printed on its side,
an old car, station wagon type, like those
with wooden sides sold in the 30s.
Most significant aspect of the image is
the slogan printed boldly below the car,
"Old Guys Rule."

My mind woke up. Old guys rule what,
I asked myself. What in hell do old guys rule?
In my world, old guys are routinely shoved aside.
I racked my brain for an answer to the question
and came up with only one reasonable response.

Old guys rule whatever they can, wherever they can,
whenever they can and how ever they can.
Inspired, I immediately turned to my computer
and forced it to type this poem and I'm okay with that.

The Legend Of Banjo Dan

He worked the mountains all his years,
planting hillside cabbage fields,
watching weather cut his yields.
selling corn and drinking beer.

From dawn to dark his calloused hands
pulled and pushed on farming gear,
but every weekend all could hear
his banjo leading Blue Ridge bands.

For sixty years this mountain man
picked out tunes for neighbor folk.
Throughout the hills as blue as smoke
the people called him Banjo Dan.

His children grew, his brothers died;
he played his banjo all the while.
The music helped him reconcile
his life of hardship with his pride.

Bile that Cabbage Down he'd play,
or, How them Mountain Girls Can Love,
or backwoods hymns to God above,
in music done the mountain way.

Dan began The Florida Blues
one day when he was eighty-five.
His mountain town had come alive
to party on its avenues.

As the old man struck his chords
a heavenly voice called him home.
Dan replied, "I'll be along
as soon as I finish up this song."
So, Banjo Dan played for the town.
He played his heart out with the band.
Then when his final notes rang o'er the land
God made him lay his banjo down.

CHARLES HAZELIP

PAINTINGS BY



Little Brother, oil on canvas, Charles Hazelip



Old Florida, oil on canvas, Charles Hazelip

CHARLES HAZELIP

PAINTINGS BY



A Grey Day at St. Marks, oil on canvas, Charles Hazelip

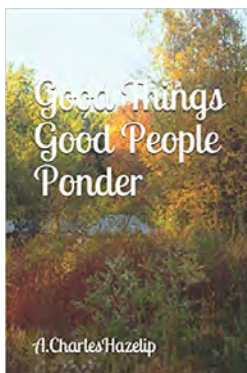
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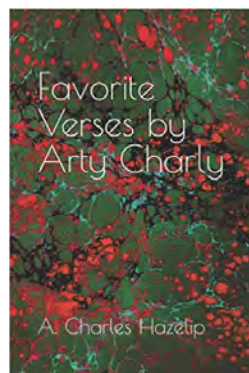


Well-earned Retirement, oil on canvas, Charles Hazelip

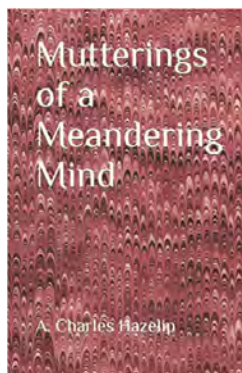
Three Books by Charles Hazelip



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[Link to book](#)



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Digging Deeper: Unearthing the bones of good writing

By Shutta Crum

Writers are readers. But are you the right kind of reader—a paleontological reader? As writers who want to hone our craft we ought to read beyond simple enjoyment. Sure, there are times when we need to escape—like anyone else—and simply wallow in the pleasures of a book, or of some poetry. Additionally, there have been many among us who have thrown a book down wondering how in the world did this get published! Or shook our heads, utterly lost in a poem we can't figure out published by a reputable journal. Then we often close the cover and just never return to a book, or poem, that is not satisfying.

However, when we're less in need of escape and more attuned to the writing life we need to read like paleontologists, of a sort. That is, if something is pleasing, dig deep and figure out why it is pleasing. If it's a turn-off, uncover its ugly bones and figure out why. Francine Prose addresses this in her wonderful book, *Reading Like a Writer* (Harper, 2007).

False fossils:

On the surface we may find that we thoroughly agree/disagree with an author's choice of subject or perspective. We may discover authors who have a beautiful way with word choice, images, sound, pacing, narrative, characterization, etc. We will also find some who don't, and we may roll our eyes. These are things we can discern just by sticking a shovel below the sod. But recognizing only these kinds of things is like finding false fossils. To improve our own writing, we need to dig deeper into the writing that seems wonderful to us and get right down into the Cambrian layer. The awful writing? Well, I wouldn't spend too much time on it. Unless it happens to be writing that is not up to snuff by authors you usually love. Then it may be worth your time to pick out what worked, and what didn't for you. Was it just a case of carelessness, laziness?

(Continued on the next page)

A journal of close reading and discovery:

A reading journal is necessary for this kind of digging. I keep a reading journal where I record why I love something I've read, or why I disliked it. This may include words, phrases, or images that were memorable. (Also, I find that these word lists can serve a secondary function as writing prompts at a later date.) But there's digging, and there's digging. While noting the aural qualities of a poem or its luminous word choice is a handy thing to do for future reference, that is only seeing the top layer—the easy stuff. We need to keep brushing the sand away despite the flies, the heat, and the long hours to find the bones—the structure of how a piece is put together.

As an example, I'll run through what I unearthed about a short poem by Sharon Olds. The poem is [The Winter After Your Death](#). (Due to copyright restrictions, I can't reproduce it here. But if you click on the link, you'll find it and be able to follow along.)

In this lovely 14-line poem, Pulitzer Prize winner Sharon Olds opens with an image of the natural world. This takes 3 lines. She then takes the "mellow light" mentioned and personifies it: "the sun closes her gold fan." That action has precipitated a turning inward and the persona of the poem thinks of the one who died: "... my green heart/turns, and thinks of you." After that internalization (and personification of her heart turning and thinking), the poem returns to the natural world where a carp is seen hanging like the sun, frozen under the ice with "... it's scarlet heart/visible ..."

There is much going on here, with lots of beautiful language. But if we dig deep, we can see that the bones of it are put together thusly:

--a natural image seen,

--a personification of the natural image,

--an internalization of the natural image and a personification of an aspect of the thinker,

--a return to the natural world in a way that connects both of the personified images (the sun and the heart).

Now, none of us may be able to write poems as beautiful as Sharon Olds! However, doing a little thinking about—and noting of—what pleases or displeases us about what we read, gives us access to new ways we might approach our own writing. Of course, the step after discovering some wonderful bones is putting them together—attempting some writing using what we've learned. Why don't you use the example above of the Sharon Olds poem and try writing one of your own with the same structure? When we are paleontological readers, who knows what we might discover?

Hey! Is that a tricera-ginsbergo-rex?

Resources:

[The Winter After Your Death, by Sharon Olds](#)

[Notes and other poems by Sharon Olds at the Poetry Foundation site](#)

[Reading Like a Writer by Francine Prose \(Harper, 2007\)](#)

FSPA CHAPTER NEWS & UPDATES

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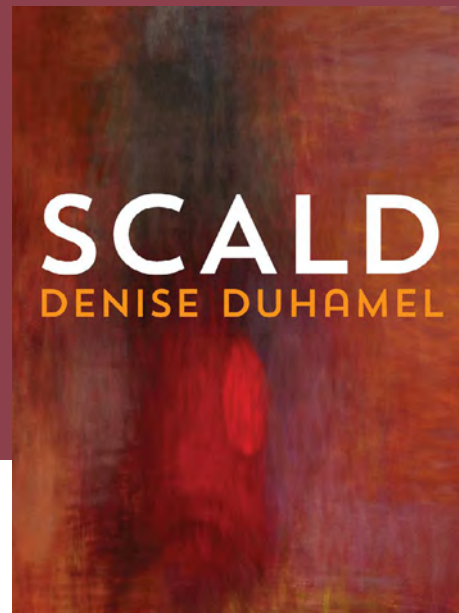
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“Denise Duhamel’s *Scald* deploys that casual-Friday Duhamel diction so effortlessly a reader might think heck, I could write like that, but then the dazzling leaps and forms begin. . . Duhamel’s sentences don’t even break a sweat, sailing on with her trademark mix of irony, grrrl power, and low-key technical virtuosity, like if Frank O’Hara, Carrie Brownstein, and Elizabeth Bishop had a baby.” —*Chicago Review*

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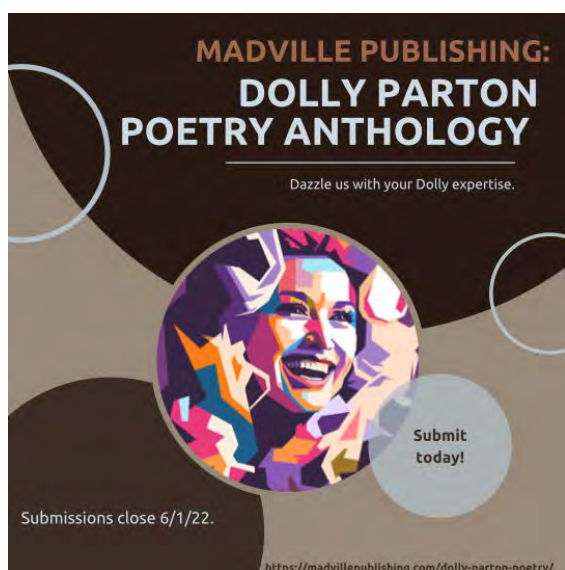
South Florida Poets



Dustin Brookshire

The South Florida Poets Chapter launches with nine brand new FSPA members who hail from Fort Lauderdale, Hollywood, Miami, West Palm Beach, & Wilton Manors, bringing a collective Florida residency of 100+ years. A total of three full-length books & 15 chapbooks written by members have been published by presses including but not limited to Bull City Press, Grey Book Press, Evening Street Press, Lethe Press, Seven Kitchens Press, Sibling Rivalry Press, Souvenir Spoon Books, Sundress Publications, Yellowjacket Press, and others.

We've launched Poem Monday. A poem is shared via email with chapter members each Monday. Members submit poems to be distributed as Monday's Poem. The rule is simple: the poem submitted must be by someone other than the submitter. The goal is to expose members to new poems/poets. The inaugural poem was "[White People Always Want to Tell Me They Grew Up Poor](#)" by Megan Fernandes.



[Link to submit](https://madvillepublishing.com/dolly-parton-poetry/)

We're excited to share the following member news. **Clayre Benzadón** recently had three poems published in *Limp Wrist*, and her poem "Halsey's Interlude" is forthcoming in *Anti-Hero Chic Mag*. Clayre is facilitating a workshop for the Miami-based nonprofit Reading Queer in March. **Dustin Brookshire** recently had two poems published in *Mollyhouse*. Dustin and **Denise Duhamel** co-edited a Barbie issue of *Limp Wrist* that will be published in March. Listen to Denise and Dustin discuss the Barbie issue on the Hive Poetry Collection by clicking [here](#). **Chris Dielmann** doesn't identify as a poet but enjoys attending poetry events. He looks forward to supporting the chapter's events. **Judy Ireland** will host two upcoming readings: the [Performance Poets of the Palm Beaches](#) reading on March 13 and a *South Florida Poetry Journal* (SoFloPoJo) anthology reading on 3/15 for *Stronger than Fear: Poems of Empowerment, Compassion, and Social Justice*. **Michael Mackin O'Mara** coordinates a quarterly *SoFloPoJo* reading series. The next reading will be in May. Click [here](#) for details. **Gregg Shapiro's** new chapbook, *Fear of Muses*, will be out in March 2022 from Souvenir Spook Book. Also in March, he's moderating a chapbooks panel at the annual Saints and Sinners LGBTQ+ literary festival in New Orleans. **Leah Silvieus** is co-facilitating with poet **Tiana Nobile** a poetry workshop for Kundiman for transracial adoptees, "Autopoesis," on 3/8/22, and she has a review of Marci Calabretta Cancio-Bello and E. J. Koh's translation of Yi Won's "The World's Lightest Motorcycle" forthcoming in *Korean Literature Now*. **Nicole Tallman's** first book, *Something Kindred*, is available for pre-order. Her chapbook, *POEMS FOR THE PEOPLE*, has been accepted for publication by [Really Serious Literature](#). She is guest editing [STAY GOLDEN](#) for *The Daily Drunk Magazine*. **Brendan Walsh's** latest chapbook is *concussion fragment*, winner of the 2021 Elsewhere Chapbook Prize. Brendan is the recent recipient of a grant from the Broward Cultural Division of Broward County to produce a spring poetry event.



Clayre, Dustin, and Brendan, featured readers at a poetry event at the Downtown Hollywood Artwalk in December

~ Dustin Brookshire, President



Peter Gordon

Orlando Area Poets

During January **Holly Mandelkern** led the social justice group of a local Episcopal church in a weekly discussion of individuals who are the subjects in her book *Beneath White Stars: Holocaust Profiles in Poetry*.

Peter Gordon's poem, *My Therapist Told Me to Change My Socks*, was published in the *Talon Review*, a Jacksonville-based online publication.

Angela Griner's poem, *Precious*, was poem of the week on the 5-2 *Crime Poetry* site for the week of January 17, and can still be found at poemsoncrime.blogspot.com

Andrew Jarvis will be attending the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference at Middlebury College this summer. He will be sharing his new poetry collection, *Sojourners*, which he workshopped at the conference previously. The collection is forthcoming from Wayfarer Books in Spring 2022.

Elaine Person started teaching her latest eight-week session of workshops for Crealde Studios on Wednesday, January 26, and taught a live writing workshop there on Feb. 12. She is scheduled to speak to our local chapter of the FWA on Thursday, March 17.

~ Peter Gordon, President



Gary Ketchum

New River Poets

Our chapter continues to meet virtually to share our poetry and offer constructive critiques with each other. However, we voted to not renew our annual contract with Zoom. We didn't want to lock ourselves into a year-long contract that would not allow cancellation if it became reasonable to gather live again during the annual term. We will continue to meet online (sans a contract) until it is deemed safe to once again meet in person.

We are happy to welcome our newest member poet to the group.

Anna Styrzula originally hails from Northwest Indiana and is a graduate of Valparaiso University. She recently relocated to the Tampa Bay area and was referred to our chapter by a friend. Anna attended our January meeting and has since expressed her delight at having discovered a local literary group with whom to share her verse.

Janet Watson will have several of her poems featured this coming spring in the 2022 *Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Journal of Florida Literature* published by the University of Central Florida. Brava, Janet! As always, we are so proud of you and look forward to seeing more of your work in print.

~ Gary Ketchum, President



Ruth Van Alstine

NORTH FLORIDA POETRY HUB

North Florida Poetry Hub is launching a year-long fun and motivating Submission Accountability Project that will engage all workshop attendees, members and non-members and get them submitting their written work to editors. We call it “Create – Submit – Celebrate!” I won’t go into all the details, but at the end of the year participants who meet or exceed their goal will be included in a special Project Anthology. Everyone is EXCITED! It’s going to be a fun and productive year at the “Hub”!



When we meet: The North Florida Poetry Hub Monthly Chapter Meeting is the last Saturday of each month 2-3:30 pm. Open Forum Workshop is the 1st Thursday and Poetry Hub the 3rd Tuesday of each month 6:30–8:00 pm on Zoom. RSVP & get the link on [NFPH Facebook Events Page](#) or email ruth@North-FloridaPoetryHub.org.

North Florida Poetry Hub (NFPH) was launched by Hope at Hand, a non-profit organization which provides poetry sessions for at-risk youth populations in Duval, Alachua, and St. Johns Counties. [Link](#)



On March 29th at 7 p.m. on Zoom, join our very own award-winning poet, **Shutta Crum**, as she leads a seminar titled “Get Published Using the Ultimate Indexing Service: Duotrope”. Take a walk through Duotrope with her, one of the handiest tools for finding publishing opportunities. You won’t want to miss this insightful, informative program!



Chris Kastle, poet, musician, storyteller, and songsmith will be performing at the Will McLean Music Festival on March 11th at the Sertoma Youth Ranch in Brooksville, Florida. She also will be performing stories and songs for children, along with other members of the Tale Tellers of St. Augustine at the PoetFest in St Augustine, Florida,

on Saturday, April 9, from 10:00-10:40 a.m. at the Crisp-Ellert Gallery at Flagler College.

One of our newest members, **Bonnie L. Boucek**, published “The Shortest Day” in the January 25th anthology *Song of ice and footprints – an anthology of nature writing*. She was a guest reader at the “Read It Wild” Poetry Event hosted by Amanda Tuke—Gold Crest Project on January 29, 2022.

Our members wrote poems and the chapter published three hundred *Poetry Scrolls* for distribution around Duval and St Johns County at events and locations such as the JAX Poetry Fest, bookstores, Little Libraries and Poem-in-your-Pocket-Day throughout April, National Poetry Month. It rocks to be a NFPH member!

~ Ruth Van Alstine - President



Tere Starr

Miami Poets

Miami Poets demonstrate that poetry resonates best when it's shared. We gather by Zoom each first Wednesday from 1 to 3 pm for the Virtual Miami Poets Soirées, facilitated by **Tere Starr**, where we share poetry, friendship and inspiration. January was our thirteenth anniversary. We hope to meet again soon at the Pinecrest Branch Library. On second Mondays we meet virtually with Group 10, the critique group facilitated by **Steven Liebowitz**. In December, Tere hosted a small Poets Day Out at Zoo Miami. **Connie Goodman-Milone**, **Pat Bonner Milone**, and **Lisa Jeffery** joined her for a VIP Behind-the-Scenes Tour.

We are sad at the loss of our member, **Shirley Seligman**. January's soiree was devoted to sharing her poetry and memories of our time with her. Shirley's ninety-seven years were filled with accomplishments. She started writing poetry ten years ago and became a valued part of our group. Shirley will be dearly missed.

Achievements: Connie Goodman-Milone, Pat Bonner Milone, Mervyn Soloman, and Tere Starr's memories of Shirley were published in February's *South Florida Writers Association's Author's Voice*. Pat's poem, "Viral Blues," and Connie's Community Relations column also appear. **Patricia Asuncion** continues to host the monthly Virtual Global Open Mics from Charlottesville, Virginia. They can be viewed on Patsy's YouTube channel. **Zorina Frey** was featured in the National Association for Poetry Therapy's *Author's Corner*. Zorina presented, "I'm Speaking Now: An Intimate Discussion about Poetry Through the Lens of Modern Black Diaspora." She will be part of their conference's opening ceremony in April. Zorina is also presenting a First Draft Happy Hour class from 6-7pm on Wednesdays as part of writingclassradio.com. Tere continues to host virtual Poetry Soirées for the Brandeis Women's South Miami Chapter. Poetry continues to be our passion.



Zorina Frey

~ Tere Starr, President



Shirley Seligman



Poets Day Out at Zoo Miami:
Connie Goodman-Milone,
Pat Bonner Milone, Tere Starr,
Lisa Jeffery



Pat Bonner Milone



Patricia Asuncion



Gordon McGill

Big Bend Poets

Slowly, but gradually, like the reappearing buds and blooms of early spring in north Florida, our public poetry in Tallahassee is being read, emoted, sung, rapped, and heard in a few venues around town. Almost all spoken word poetry had ceased, eclipsed by the pandemic, after March 2020, and like most poetry circles around the world, gone into cyberspace.

In December, Big Bend Chapter members **Samiri Hernández Hiraldo**, **Linda Marie Cossa**, and Gordon Magill were part of a reading at A Night of Latin American Music and Poetry hosted by Tallahassee Hispanic Theatre Florida, held at Blue Tavern in Tallahassee. Blue Tavern, shuttered for a year or so after being one of the most vibrant live music venues in town, has re-opened and is valiantly hosting music and poetry events on a nightly basis.

Also at Railroad Square Art Park in the old part of Tallahassee, the Big Bend Chapter hosted a small poetry “Open Mic” at Square Mug Cafe&Coffee, with additional musical entertainment by Hot Tamale.

At Jan’s Gallery, also in the Art Park at Railroad Square, two Big Bend Poets, **Cynthia Rose** and **Avis Simmonds** read from their collections for Valentine’s Eve on February 13.

As the spring season waxes, we hope more poetry events will be taking place with Big Bend Chapter poets participating. The arrival of the literary festival Word of South in April is expected to arouse even more interest in “live and out loud” spoken word poetry as the weather warms, and we can be outdoors in Tallahassee.

~ Gordon Magill
Big Bend Poets Chapter Coordinator



Samiri Hernández Hiraldo and Linda Marie Coss



Charles Hazelip

Poetry For the Love Of It

January ushered in a new year with resolutions, birthdays and anniversaries. As the Earth continues to age, so too do PLOI chapter members.

With a few exceptions for conflicts with schedules, PLOI continues to meet the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month with a new list of notable poets for 2022. January's notable poet was **Lydia Maria Child**. She authored a Thanksgiving Day poem which evolved over the years into the Christmas carole we know as "Over the River." **Percy Bysshe Shelley** was February's poet, and March's will be Hamlin Garland.

Members continue to encourage each other in their own poetic efforts. Meeting via Zoom helps to save wear and tear on budgets, automobiles and bodies.

May the Year of the Tiger prove to be grrreat!

~ Linda Whitefeather, PLOI Chapter Recording Secretary & Acting Meeting Monitor on behalf of Charles Hazelip, PLOI Chapter President



Mary-Ann Westbrook

Tomoka Poets

Tomoka Poets are finally back home at the Ormond Beach library. We have excitedly acquired a few new members who are putting poetic smiles on our faces. At the end of March we will return to our other home, Copperline Coffee and Cafe in the Pavilion Shopping Center in Port Orange. Thursday, March 24, 7:00pm to 9:00pm, emcee **Marc Davidson** will approach the microphone and start the long awaited return. We invite all poets to join us and let the World hear poetry again.

~ Mary-Ann Westbrook, President



Marc Davidson

The Live Poets Society of Daytona Beach

We had our regular meeting and shared poems on the subject of gardens, both real and as a metaphor. Eight members attended, and we still hope more of our members will be able to resume attending in person as time goes by. Next meeting: March 16, 2 p.m., City Island Library.

~ Marc Davidson, President

Editor's Choice Challenge: Sonnet

Going Through Their Things

For the most part, their days were simple acts.
I can see that now; going through their things.
These receipts Mom kept . . . I could lay them out
and piece their lives together. How often
she bought milk. He, nails or a tube of caulk.
I could count cards rubber-banded, treasured;
birthdays, Christmas, Father's Day, Mother's Day.
My siblings and I, toss, sort. Things we do

for the parents who loved, and then left us.
We find orphaned pictures from happy times;
us as children, our pets, our friends, our cars,
Mom pregnant and open-faced with laughter,
Dad being goofy, more often than not.
Our duty: to lift this heart-hurting lot.

~ Shutta Crum

Published: *Blue Mountain Review*, 2020.

Sonnet to Destiny, My First Stripper

My Mom forbade me go, yet still I crept
into the Star Lite Lounge that snowy eve.
Drumroll, fanfare, spotlight! On stage you leapt.
Knew I must see you nude or could not leave.

Trembled with desire to touch your flesh
Pasty-covered breasts glowed like a sunrise.
You saw teen me, lustful, red-faced, young, fresh.
Knew what I desired; made me your prize --

danced round me like a pole. I just stood there
intoxicated; perfume filled my head,
till I saw your wrinkled skin, wig for hair.
Jumped down off stage. You were an act! I fled.

Cold night cooled my ardor. You were my school.
Never believe the hype became my rule.

~ Peter M. Gordon

Editor's Choice Challenge: Sonnet

Interior Design

for Henry David Thoreau

Three chairs suffice, the first for Solitude,
to sit and gather dreams as they unfold.
He tallies up his findings many-hued,
communing with himself on Nature's gold.

The second chair seats honest pilgrims, friends
whose homespun thoughts need space to resonate.
He welcomes dialogue through focused lens
of ponderings where ideas incubate.

Society can claim the final chair,
allowing spacious learning for each guest
though none with Nature's showcase can compare,
its innocent beneficence, impressed.

Three chairs design a grand and grounded tone
but he desires a paradise—alone.

~ Holly Mandelkern

Season with Nature

The sun bunks early from the sky
As the autumn steps on the earth;
The leaves tremble in the air with cold and fear
At the thought of leaving siblings and mother.

Some leaves are scattered hither and thither,
While lots are heaped around the mother
It is fun to watch the troupe of whirling leaves
Run dancing after wind-the-choreographer!

In colorful gown they fly after some invisible pied piper
Like crazy mob or unruly kids in the fun fair;
The barren skeleton plant staring dumb
Look for butterfly to come, meet and mate .

Awaits patiently for right season with confidence,
To bear new leaves, flowers, fruits and fortune!!

~ Sipra Roy

Editor's Choice Challenge: Sonnet

WINTER ROBINS

Flocks of robins dot the sky this nighttime,
Far overhead in Northeast dusk they flee;
Their sprightly hops transpose to flight and climb
A trail of wonder beckoning to me.

Bound for home or only a waystation,
The robins' sense of place upended now,
They make their most untimely migration
Forsaking Nature's wintry bare-bones bough.

Out of season, syncing with the unknown
These birds fly high to find a different spring
In late December; they have rightly flown
Into this New Year's Eve's great transcending.

A new beginning, wafting over snow—
Why be surprised when winter robins go?

~ Pat Barry

How Do I Write Thee? (Sonnet 2)

How do I write thee? "Let me count the ways."¹
I write thee in the length and count and rhyme
My mind can see, while thinking a hill climb
With the goal of turning a graceful phrase.
I write thee as a challenge, lasting days;
Need fourteen lines, octave, sestet each time.
I write thee strictly, as poets sublime;
I write thee closely, as on form I gaze.
I write thee with an effort reserved for
Difficult kinds with outrageous guidelines.
I write with "iambic bongo"² ardour
"and rhymes positioned at the ends of lines."²
As Browning and Collins my burdens bore,
I shall but write thee as Petrarch³ defines.

~ Suzanne S. Austin-Hill

Notes

1. How Do I Love Thee? (Sonnet 43)
Elizabeth Barrett Browning '
<https://poets.org/poem/how-do-i-love-thee-sonnet-43>
2. February 1999, Sonnet, Billy Collins
<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/browse?contentId=40461>
3. Sonnet
<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/learn/glossary-terms/sonnet>

Editor's Choice Challenge: Sonnet

Do you believe all poetry should rhyme?

Do you believe all poetry should rhyme?
Don't forget: life's surprising scattered schemes
jumble our dreams as we trundle through time,
just as verse can't be plotted perfectly.

Come on, dear. Let's give our couplet a chance!
We'll never achieve emotional rest
if we erase our freshly styled romance.
Don't make the rhythm of our souls a mess!

So we'll recite vows in cadenced refrain,
follow that meter to mend our worn hearts,
exchange hopeful words of patience, not pain,
unite with no fear to keep us apart.

While the cascades of years carry us hence,
with rhymes and reasons that often lack sense.

~ Mary Ellen Orvis

Bed Side

His fingers slide across the vacant sheet
To smooth away the wrinkles lying there,
Where once her perfumed presence warmed his sleep,
His searching palms embracing only air.

He reaches for her pillow just as if
The hug of it might somehow ease his pain
And breathes her very essence in a sniff
That turns into a snuffle sobbed in vain.

He cannot bring himself to make the bed,
Nor draw the coverlet up over all,
So sweeps the sheet with deep caress instead
And weeps afresh to contemplate the pall.

For endless empty nights beside her side,
He wonders why his young bride should have died.

~ John F. Foster

Editor's Choice Challenge: Sonnet

doggerel

I pulled a rabbit out of my shoe!
Wasn't that a nifty thing to do?
If I had had a hat to spare
I would have pulled him out of there.
Yes, rabbits are a funny bunch.
Just give them lettuce to eat for lunch
and I have not the slightest doubt
that they will let you pull them out
of a sewing basket or washing machine,
a bag of puppies or a soup tureen,
a concrete mixer, a plate of spaghetti--
a wedding cake? They're more than ready.
I pulled one out of an Easter bonnet
and squeezed him in to this silly sonnet

~ Denis Rhodes

Next Issue:

Editor's Choice Challenge

Prompt: Bloom

Form: Free Verse

Submit by: April 1, 2022

to Mark@TKOrlando.com

For the May | June Issue

A Little Lagniappe:



Multi-media art with a black-out poem, Ruth Van Alstine

A Little Lagniappe:

Florida winter frolics
Under brisk sunshine
While bougainville flourishes.

~ Mary Ellen Orvis



Do you have A Little Lagniappe?
If you have a short poem associated with an image
that you created, and would like them considered
for publication in *Of Poets & Poetry*, please send the
poem and image to me at Mark@TKOrlando.com.

Of Poets & Poetry is published six times per year: January, March, May, July, September & November.

FOR SUBMISSIONS

Due Dates:

January: Due by December 1
March: Due by February 1
May: Due by April 1
July: Due by June 1
September: Due by August 1
November: Due by October 1

Submittal Specifications:

Format for text:
Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx),
RTF, TXT, or PDF format files.
Please do not embed your
submission in an email.

Format for images:
150 to 300 pixels/inch resolution
but no larger than 3.5M in JPEG (.jpg)
format. If you are unable to do this,
contact the Editor at 407.620.0158.

Note: Please know that we will make every effort to include all qualified submissions, if space allows, and we may choose to edit your submission.

Email submissions to:
mark@TKOrlando.com



IN THE NEWS

Book Written By Tampa area Teenagers To Be Featured

In American Poetry Museum— The book called “I Am...A Young Black Man” is filled with poems written by young black teenagers in Tampa Bay, many of them touching on their goals and fears in life. One of the students, Donovan Terry, wasn’t expecting his poem to become so famous. “I was actually surprised myself because I never thought I’d be in a book,” said Terry. What started off as a Summer-camp assignment last year, turned into a book that is now making history. “The students created ‘I am’ poems as a free-write. They didn’t have time to think about what they were going to write. It was a 15 minute activity,” said Tavis Myrick, Gentlemen’s Quest of Tampa Director. “As they began to present their activities to me and one of our other teachers, we were just so overwhelmed with what the students were sharing,” said Myrick. It was an assignment that changed the lives of the teenage boys who are part of a local non-profit called Gentlemen’s Quest of Tampa. “The book is all about young black men telling poems about how they feel,” said Terry.

Sunshine State Book Festival — Florida has an amazing literary history dating back to William Bartram nearly 250 years ago. Today, Gainesville is a leading center of literary culture and home to hundreds of writers, novelists, playwrights, and poets, many of whom you can meet at the Sunshine State Book Festival on Saturday, April 9, 2022, at the Oaks Mall, and on Sunday, April 10, 2022, at the Matheson History Museum in downtown Gainesville, Florida. [Link](#)

SAVE THE DATES! — Vero Beach: Riding Jackson Foundation —

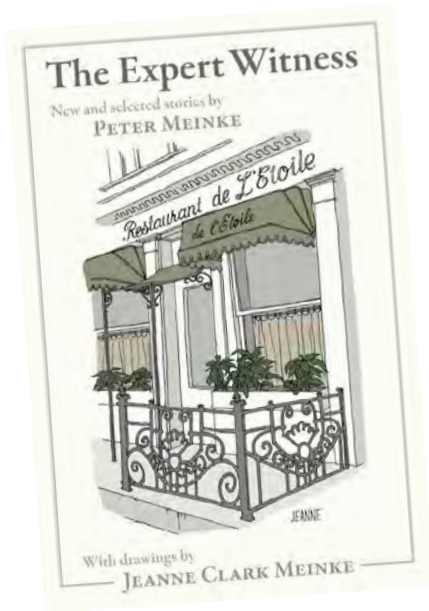
10th Annual Poetry and BBQ is set for May 14, 2022 — Tickets will be available for purchase soon. While you wait, please consider purchasing our upcoming Poetry and Barbeque celebratory anthology, [Decade: Ten Years of Poetry and Barbeque](#), which is now available.

This is the twentieth edition of *Of Poets and Poetry* that I have created with the help of so many of you—Al, Marc, Sonja-Jean, Mary, Diane, Chancellors, FSPA members and all the others (including my wife Jane.) What a journey! I am humbled by the reception it has received and by the willingness to contribute of such a great a number of poets. I admit that at times it feels as if I am swimming against an angry autumn rip tide at New Smyrna Beach, and yet at other times, I sense I am floating on a summery day, tubing the Ichnetucknee. No matter, reflecting on these past issues, I see true growth and that inspires me. I hope you have enjoyed reading as much as I, and I look forward to what may become twenty more.

Yours in poetry,

Mark Andrew James Terry, editor

The Expert Witness



New and selected stories by
PETER MEINKE

With drawings by
JEANNE CLARK MEINKE

This new collection of twenty-six stories includes eighteen hard-to-find gems and eight new tales from Flannery O'Connor Award Winner and Florida Poet Laureate Peter Meinke. Jeanne Clark Meinke has added two dozen new and selected drawings to form a collection sure to become a favorite.

PETER MEINKE is an author whose work has been published in *The Atlantic*, *The New Yorker*, *The New Republic*, *Poetry*, *Tampa Review*, eight books of the Pitt Poetry Series, and in two collections of fiction. He is Poet Laureate of Florida. **JEANNE CLARK MEINKE** is an artist whose drawings have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Gourmet*, *Yankee*, and numerous other periodicals. Together they have collaborated on a previous children's book and many other publications, including *Lines from Neuchatel*, *Truth and Affection*, *The Shape of Poetry*, and *Lines from Wildwood Lane* (a collection of her own drawings), all published by the University of Tampa Press.



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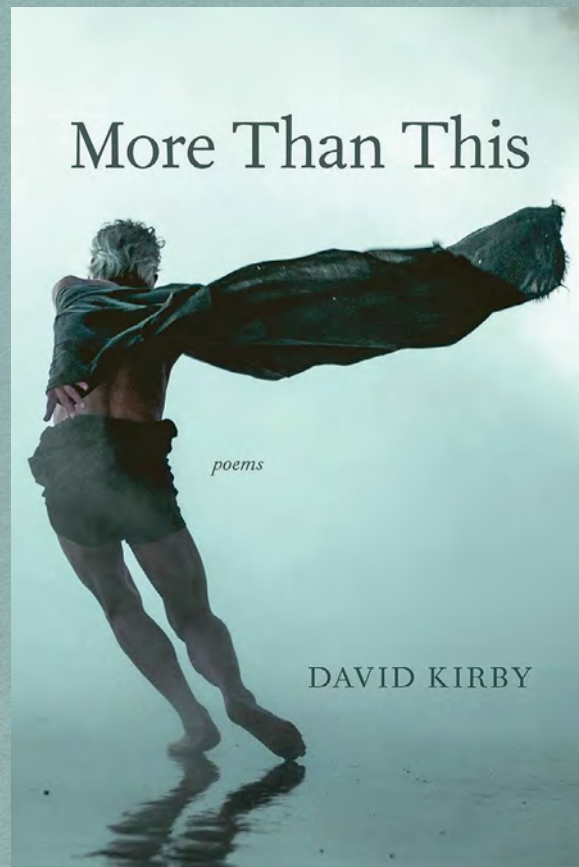
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