

# POETRY CENTER

## NEWS & NOTES

VOLUME 30 #2  
SPRING/SUMMER 2005

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### Executive Director's Note

*"It is time for the ritual. / To dance, sing so rain may come, / so the earth may be fixed one more time."  
-- Ofelia Zepeda, from "O'odham Dances"*

The Poetry Center celebrated spring with a flourish this year. After a full slate of April National Poetry Month activities, including a 10 Years/10 Cities partnership with the Academy of American Poets, we welcomed the month of May with fanfare. On Thursday morning May 5, we broke ground at 1508 E. Helen Street in Tucson for the new Helen S. Schaefer building, a permanent home for the Poetry Center. Beth Harrison, development director from the Academy of American Poets, who traveled from New York to participate in the ceremonies, reminded us that "the Poetry Center is singular – a unique institution. A handful of other cities have literary centers, but nothing quite like this place exists anywhere else."

At the official groundbreaking College of Humanities Dean Charles Tatum introduced a host of dignitaries, including Arizona Attorney General Terry Goddard, who expressed enormous pride that this international destination for the literary arts and lifelong learning is located in the state of Arizona. Helen and John Schaefer further marked the occasion by announcing that they will donate two first editions of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* to the Center's new rare book room. As a leading scholarly poetry archive, the Center will treasure these editions of the seminal modernist work.

Finally it was a day to honor the great gift of poetry. Ofelia Zepeda closed the morning ceremonies with a moving recitation of "O'odham Dances." Richard Shelton offered up a poem of his own and one by Poetry Center founder Ruth Stephan: "Look: the munificence of miracles / is in the change" she wrote in "Exercises on Problems of Vision." Alison Hawthorne Deming's "The Place of Poetry," which she wrote to commemorate the occasion, considers all the ways and whys that people write poems. She concludes, "Some people use poems instead of shovels to turn the ground for planting." On May 5 golden shovels broke the earth and turned the ground. Here we have planted a place where the literary arts will thrive. As Billy Collins remarked in a congratulatory email, "Poetry truly blooms in the desert."



*Ofelia Zepeda, Tucson's Poet Laureate; Arizona Attorney General Terry Goddard in background.*

This day of celebration was also a day of witness and remembrance. During the post-groundbreaking program, we observed Cinco De Mayo with performances of recent Poetry Center award winning high school corridos. We reflected on Holocaust Remembrance Day with UA Senior Keren Raz who read from her English honors thesis about her grandfather's Holocaust experience, and David Ray read from his 2004 book, *A Thousand Years: Poems About the Holocaust*. We listened to reminiscences and testimonials from Arizona

Commission on the Arts Executive Director Shelley Cohn, Tucson Pima Arts Council Executive Director Mary Anne Ingenthron, English Department Head Larry Evers, Creative Writing Director Elizabeth Evans, former Poetry Center director Lois Shelton and High School Poet-in-Residence Theresa Sotto.

## UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA POETRY CENTER

The University of Arizona Poetry Center, an area of special emphasis within the College of Humanities, was founded in 1960 by writer and philanthropist Ruth Stephan. The Center's nationally acclaimed special collection library of poetry contains over 50,000 items, including books, periodicals, audio and video recordings, rare and limited edition books, photographs and broadsides. Begun in 1962, the Visiting Poets and Writers Reading Series has featured over 1000 readers, including most major contemporary U.S. poets, significant international visitors and emerging artists. The Center sponsors a number of diverse outreach programs as part of its sustained effort to cultivate audiences for poetry and literature. Temporarily located at 1600 East First Street, Tucson, Arizona 85721, the Poetry Center is raising funds to build a permanent home worthy of its international reputation. For further information, please call (520) 626-3765 or visit [www.poetrycenter.arizona.edu](http://www.poetrycenter.arizona.edu).

### Poetry Center Staff

Gail Browne, Executive Director  
 Frances Sjoberg, Literary Director  
 Christine Krikliwy, Program Coordinator  
 Rodney Phillips, Librarian  
 Michael Rerick, Events Coordinator  
 Mike DeHart, Marketing Assistant  
 Dawn Pendergast, Technical Assistant  
 Katie Wagner, Library Assistant  
 High School Intern, Renee Quihuis  
 High School Poets-in-Residence: Theresa Sotto, Violet Hopkins  
 Visiting Poets for Preschool/Kindergarten: Taylor Johnson,  
 Mauryne Maxwell

### Consultants:

Sally Masteller, Database Consultant & Permissions Coordinator  
 Mauryne Maxwell, Poetry For Young Children Project Coordinator

### Volunteers:

Tony Luebbermann, Volunteer Coordinator; Pat Cadigan; Josh Fox; Ann Laughlin; Irma Shepherd

**Advisory Board:** Dean Charles Tatum, Larry Evers, Elizabeth Evans, Ann Dernier, Steve Orlen, Javier Duran, Roger Bowen, Kate Mackay, Barbara Allen, Lisa Cooper, Paul Klinger, Waylon Begay, Danny Clifford

**Development Committee:** Helen S. Schaefer, Chair; Randall Holdridge, Co-chair; Winifred Bundy; Colleen Burns; Alison Hawthorne Deming; Marshall Fealk; Norma Feldman; Jimmye Hillman; Tony Luebbermann; George Rosenberg; Lois Shelton; Richard Shelton; Harris Sobin; and James Walsh

**Benefactors:** Anonymous, Elizabeth Bernays, Jim and Colleen Burns, Clint Colby and J. Mac Fry, Nancy Eldredge, Tony and Susan Luebbermann, Melanie and Peter Maier, Austin Publicover, Peggy Shumaker and Joseph Usibelli, Les and Susan Wallach, Nancy Warfield

## Fall 2005 Visiting Poets and Writers Reading Series

Thursday, September 1  
**Matt Hart and Dean Young**  
 7 p.m. at the Phoenix Art Museum

September 7  
**Alison Hawthorne Deming and Jane Miller**

September 21  
**Alan Shapiro**

October 19  
**Claudia Rankine**

November 2  
**Nick Flynn**

December 7  
**Albert Goldbarth**

Unless otherwise noted, readings take place on Wednesday evening at 8 p.m. in the Modern Languages Auditorium on the UA campus.

Readings are supported by Friends of the Poetry Center, College of Humanities, the University of Arizona Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Arizona Commission on the Arts. The Series also benefits from organizational and individual co-sponsors, including the Tucson Writers' Project at the Tucson-Pima Public Library, Phoenix Art Museum, Clint Colby and J. Mac Fry, Peggy Shumaker and Joseph Usibelli, Austin Publicover,

For more information, contact Frances Sjoberg at 520/626-3765.

## Fall 2005 UA Prose Writers Series

August 31  
**Ruben Martinez**

October 5  
**Nina Marie Martinez**

Both events take place at 8 p.m. in the Modern Languages Auditorium on the UA campus.

Prose readings are sponsored by the College of Humanities and the Department of English, with support from the Poetry Center.

For more information, contact Aurelie Sheehan at [asheehan@u.arizona.edu](mailto:asheehan@u.arizona.edu).

**STAFF NEWS**

**Congratulations to Christine Krikliwy**, Poetry Center Program Coordinator, who received the Billy Joe Varney Award for Excellence at the University of Arizona. Her award was presented at the 17th Annual Awards for Excellence ceremony on April, 15th.

**Our heartfelt goodbye to Tim Bell, who left the Poetry Center this May.**

The Center's staff extends our thanks to Tim for his work in the Poetry Center for the past six years. In addition to managing day-to-day library tasks, Tim, as Library Specialist, oversaw the conversion of our card catalog to electronic format. We wish him well and will miss him greatly.



*Gail Browne, Billy Joe Varney, Christine Krikliwy and UA President Peter A. Likins*

**Welcome to Rodney Phillips, Librarian.** Rodney Phillips will begin working at the Poetry Center this summer. After 35 years of service, Rodney retired last year from the New York Public Library where he had been Director of the Humanities and Social Sciences Library and Curator of the prestigious Berg Collection of English and American Literature. He has a MLS from the University of Oregon and a MA in English from NYU. He has curated numerous exhibits, including *The Art of Reading* at Poets House and *Hellfire: Editions and Illustrations of Dante's Inferno* at the Poetry Center. Rodney is the author, with Ken Benson and Susan Benesch, of *The Hand of the Poet: Manuscripts by 100 Masters*, and, with Stephen Clay, *A Secret Location on the Lower East Side: Adventures in Writing, 1960-1980*. We look forward to working with Rodney as we prepare to reintegrate the entire Poetry Center collection and begin to develop a rare book archive, to be housed in the Rare Book Room at the new Poetry Center.

**Congratulations to High School Poet-In-Residence Theresa Sotto**, who received the College of Humanities Dean's Outstanding Graduate Assistant Teaching Award for teaching poetry at UA, Tucson Magnet, Desert View, Sunnyside and Cholla High Schools. Sotto also wrote a cross-curricular teaching unit on the corrido for the Poetry Center and ARTSEdge, the National Arts and Education Network, a program of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The lessons and an interactive jukebox are available on the ARTSEdge website at [www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/3772](http://www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/3772).

**CONGRATULATIONS TO CONTEST WINNERS:**

University Contest Awards judged by Dan Beachy-Quick: Academy of American Poets Prize - Dawn Pendergast for "In Epistles;" Margaret Sterling Memorial Awards - Kristi Maxwell for "The Turk: The First Chess-Playing Automaton" and Anna Fulford for "Not My Totem" and other poems; Poetry Center Prizes - Marty Hebrank for "Tracking Sequence" and Molly Cooney for "my girlfriend keeps a detailed log of dead birds..." and other poems. Honorable Mentions are: TC Tolbert, Violet Hopkins, and Marianne Go.

Bilingual High School Corrido Contest judged by Professor Javier Durán: 1st Place: Jesus A. Marin, a sophomore at Carl Hayden High School in Phoenix for "Las Muertes de Juarez;" 2nd Place: Nicole Velarde, a sophomore at Arizona School for the Arts in Phoenix for "Libertad." Corridista Guillermo Saenz composed music for the corridos and presented the songs, with the winning poets, on April 30 at a Contest Awards Presentation on the University of Arizona campus. Diplomas of Potential (Honorable Mentions) Elizabeth Marquez and Ruben Noriega, both seniors at Cholla High School in Tucson, read their corridos at the event.

Tucson Presidio Trust Celebrating Arizona 4th Grade Poetry Contest judged by the J. Alfred Prufrock Society of Undergraduate Poets: Judge's Award - Alison O'Brien from Manzanita Elementary; 2nd Prize - Erica Ramos from Bonitas Elementary, 3rd Prize - Alison Comrie from Manzanita Elementary.

Youth Slam Champions judged by Boyer Rickel and Geoff Brock: 1st Place - Corday Johnson, Tucson High Magnet School; 2nd Place (tie) - Lauren Lederman and Emma Greenbaum, both from Tucson High Magnet School; 3rd Place - Sasha Charis, Magee Middle School. The Youth Slam was emceed by poet Regie Gibson and organized by Theresa Sotto and Violet Hopkins. Prizes were donated by EM Press, Antigone Books, Zia Records, The Loft Cinema, and Casa Video.

**SUMMER RESIDENCY**

The Poetry Center is pleased to announce that poet Eric Abbott of Santa Fe, NM was selected to be the Poetry Center's 2005 Summer Resident. Eric Abbott will receive a \$500 stipend and a one-month residency in Tucson at Casa Libre en la Solana. He will be in residence from July 6-August 6. Runners-up for the Poetry Center Summer Residency are: Sandra Beasley, Deborah Bernhardt, Victoria Chang, Bruna Mori, and Ashley VanDoorn. Judges were poet Richard Siken and fiction writer Lydia Millet.

**April 2005. Tucson and Houston.**

**Rodney Phillips:** All of your three published books are really different. Can you please describe each of them in a sentence?

**Nick Flynn:** I think you should describe each one as well, then we can have a contest. And besides, there are four books:

*Some Ether:*

*Blurb:* An act of shameless self-mytho-poeticising, where Flynn tries to subvert his narrative tendencies by forays into invented “forms.”

*Over-riding emotion while writing it:* Desperation.

*Soundtrack:* Plastic Ono Band.

*Blind Huber:*

*Blurb:* Hoping to break out of il nuovo confessione, Flynn writes a series of persona poems, which seems to allow messier emotions (self-pity, bitterness, small-heartedness) more free-range, but sends him headlong into pathetic fallacy hell.

*Over-riding emotion while writing it:* Embarrassment.

*Soundtrack:* Philip Glass, The Photographer.

*A Note Slipped under the Door:*

*Blurb:* The money-maker, which sank like a stone.

*Over-riding emotion while writing it:* Self-righteousness.

*Soundtrack:* Donna Summer, I Feel Love

*Another Bullshit Night in Suck City:*

*Blurb:* A dodgy slip back into the myth factory, where Flynn appears, or wants to appear, to be free of self-pity and judgment, and to show his shadow side, yet finds it is all still a construct, that the self is a persona, that memory is fiction.

*Over-riding emotion while writing it:* “This is a big mistake.”

*Soundtrack:* Johnny Cash, The Man Comes Around.

**RP:** What two or three dead poets are partially responsible for you? What two or three live ones have affected you (aka, your teachers), and why, or is that how?

**NF:** Dead poets: Dickinson still amazes me, how she can slip between realities so fluidly, how she never seems worried if the audience is along for the ride with her. And Berryman, the tension he achieved in the *Dream Songs*, between high and low culture, between his instinct and his Shakespeare. Rilke took me awhile to embrace, but once I did it was pure electricity. That’s three; tomorrow, another three.

Live ones: I have this sense that 21st century American poetry, so far, belongs to women: Anne Carson, Brenda Hillman, Claudia Rankine, Maggie Nelson, Matthea Harvey, Olena Kaltyiak Davis, Harryette Mullen, LeeAnn Brown, etc, etc. Many of us men, it seems, are just trying to keep up, or are mired in past glory—a ridiculous, sweeping generalization, I know, and I could name many male poets whose work is stunning, but it does seem like it’s women who are pushing the form forward.

**RP:** Talk a little about your method of composition. In particular how you might use the scraps and fragments you write down here and there, now and then.

**NF:** Well, when I’m walking in a strange city I have this ritual, which is to find three bits of ephemera, usually scraps of paper, usually something torn from advertisements, or maybe a ticket stub, or discarded cigarette pack, trash really, but it has to have some element in it that catches my eye, that interests me, or reminds me of something. I like pages torn from children’s notebooks a lot, with drawings on them, though they don’t always mix well with other images. Once I find one it might determine what comes next, one that somehow either adds to the one I already have or else works against it, creating some tension or juxtaposition, though if it feels too limiting I’ll throw it away and start over. Eventually, over the course of a day, I’ll settle on the



Rodney Phillips



Nick Flynn

“I have this sense that 21st century American poetry, so far, belongs to women.”

three scraps of paper, and then I'll force myself to make a collage. I make a collage a day, always from only three scraps, because anything more becomes chaos, and I try to only use things I found that day, and to date the final collage, also finding the "canvas," usually a weathered piece of cardboard, a technique I learned from Bill Traylor. So I have to carry a glue stick, or buy it in a stationary store once I land, which is even better, because I like stationary stores, especially in other countries. I write the same way.

**RP:** You have a lot of friends who are visual artists and have collaborated with some of them in various ways. Can you talk a little about this aspect of yourself?

**NF:** Maybe everything is collaboration, in that we read poetry before we write our own poems, and we watch movies and imagine a poem for each scene, and listen to hardcore music as we're writing poems, and we talk with pals to find out what to read, and we read our poem to friends so we know it's done. I've worked with various other artists over the years—musicians, painters, dancers, filmmakers, other poets, playwrights—mostly just because I enjoy trying to understand another person's process, and how poetry intersects that process. It seems to make the world bigger.

**“Eventually, over the course of a day, I'll settle on the three scraps of paper, and then I'll force myself to make a collage.”**

**RP:** Do you know who Angela Davis is?

**NF:** My grandma's name was Alice Davis, but I don't think they're related. Of course, why do you ask? Smart, beautiful, principled, went to jail with Muhammed Ali because neither would shut up, and still won't. Guess it was a little later she went to jail.

**RP:** Yep, no one. You have taught poetry to kids of a wide variety of ages. What do you like about teaching and what is not so pleasant about it.

**NF:** I actually like most aspects of teaching, especially when I can step out of the way and let the students find what they know. I've had such great poetry teachers over the years, so I've come to see it as near to a guild system as we have, that it really is an oral art, still passed on from person to person, as it has always been. Or maybe that's just true for the last few years, with these MFA programs, but I see them as tying into this ancient tradition. In Hanoi there is a temple of literature 2000 years old, where young writers would go to learn from masters, and then make their way out into the world.

**RP:** Did you tell me what you were working on now? This very moment, I mean.

**NF:** At this moment, or this one? I'm working on getting through this semester, actually, looking forward to one day with absolutely nothing to do. ♦

*Nick Flynn is the recipient of numerous awards including a Discovery/THE NATION Prize, fellowships from the Library of Congress and the Guggenheim Foundation, and the coveted Amy Lowell Traveling Poetry Fellowship, which allowed him to spend two years in Italy, Ireland, and Tanzania. He has worked as a ship's captain, an electrician, a case-worker with homeless adults, and a member of the Teachers College Writing Project at Columbia University, where he consulted with students and teachers in NYC public schools. He is now an Assistant Professor in Creative Writing at the University of Houston.*

*Rodney Phillips is the Librarian at the University of Arizona Poetry Center. (See page 3 for full bio.)*

*Nick Flynn will read from his work for the Visiting Poets and Writers Reading Series on November 2, 2005. His reading is sponsored by Clint Colby and J. Mac Fry.*



**Claudia Rankine**

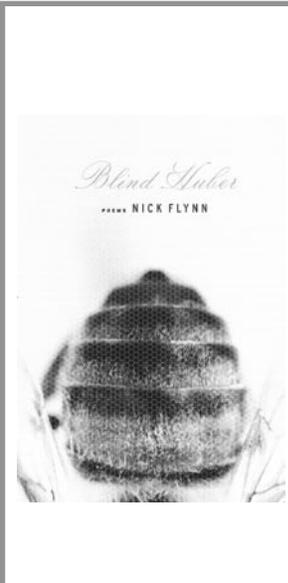
*Don't Let Me Be Lonely*, Graywolf Press, 2004

In a book that defies classification, Claudia Rankine juxtaposes blocks of lyric prose, short narratives, meditations on various aspects of contemporary culture, dialogue, and poetry excerpts with photographs, illustrations, and film and television stills. Such disparate subjects and modes of discourse are woven together to reveal their connections within American society, intermittently disrupted with the image of a static-filled television screen. As if channel surfing, readers are pulled briefly into intense story lines (i.e., cancer, hate crimes, war) then quickly given relief. For Rankine's speaker, television is both a distraction *from* and a transmitter *of* current information (albeit filtered). *Don't Let Me Be Lonely* is a timely meditation—so timely that the extensive 21-page notes section might be necessary for readers ten years from now. However, Rankine is not afraid to raise the big, timeless questions: What is truth? How are we to grasp death? What is the self? How do we obtain knowledge? What is poetry? What keeps Rankine's text from becoming too heavy-handed or sentimental is her straightforward, sometimes deadpan, tone. Both the sodomy of Abner Louima and a friend's struggle with cancer are recounted with a distance that positions Rankine as an observer rather than a pundit, one who bears witness to current events—both personal and national—rather than dramatizes. This distance is indeed acknowledged by Rankine: "I write this without breaking my heart, without bursting into anything. Perhaps this is the real source of my sadness. ... I don't know, I just find when the news comes on I switch the channel." In *Don't Let Me Be Lonely*, Rankine captures the struggles of a collective, post 9-11 American conscious that is simultaneously pessimistic about a more humane society, and discontent with one's own pessimism. --Theresa Sotto

**Nick Flynn**

*Blind Huber*, Graywolf Press, 2002

In "Hive," a poem in the voice of bees, Nick Flynn writes "Once we filled an entire house with it, / built the comb between floorboard / & joist, slowly at first, the constant buzz kept the owners awake, then / louder, until honey began to seep from the walls, swell / the doorframes. Our gift." His second book of poems, *Blind Huber*, mimics the hive construction, but it is the pages rather than the doorframes that swell with poetry's equivalent of honey: lyricism—Flynn's gift to his readers. The book's title stems from the surname of the blind 18th-century beekeeper credited for most modern knowledge of beekeeping. Perhaps this translates most interestingly into the sound-choices that guide these poems, from alliteration to deftly placed rhyme to repetition—it seems as if the poet did not simply imagine a voice for Huber, but imagined himself as Huber, whose blindness dictated his curiosity be satisfied through auditory, rather than visual, means. Thus the poems rarely hinge on an image, but instead on the process of imagining. The poems' speakers—Huber, his assistant Burnens, and the bees—play a seamless game of tag-team in the word arena Flynn's made for them. Through these multifaceted perspectives, we glimpse history through contact with an inner and outer world that reveals the nature of our senses and the sense in nature. Even the book's deep yellow cover is in keeping with the product of bees and adequately frames the text's richness, which Flynn in the voice of Huber best explains the conception and success of: "the idea of an alphabet / begun, then the idea of a word, then the idea / itself, each bee / a cipher, a tiny letter hanging above the blackboard, / the parade of vowel & / consonant, its own contagious song." --Kristi Maxwell

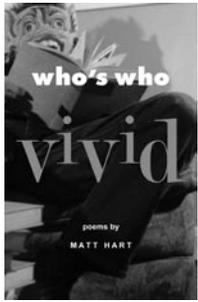


**Albert Goldbarth**

*Budget Travel Through Space and Time*, Graywolf Press, 2005



Reporting on both the heroic souls and lusty bit-players of his expansive, although admittedly "species-centric," space and time, Albert Goldbarth is always in search of "the turnstile" that will "allow our passage / into the depths." The turnstile, for Goldbarth, seems to be less a security barrier than a sorting mechanism for his crowd of anecdotes. In *Budget Travel Through Space and Time*, conversational gestures ease the reader through multi-pronged meditations on the science-fiction tomes of yesteryear, horse-dung telescopes, and forbidden lovemaking in assisted-care facilities. Zany musicality supplies additional interest: far from home, the poet stops to listen for "the zipper-like, rivy rush of a few / Goliath centipedes in under-underbrush." Twice acknowledging his own proclivity for "a sonnety fourteen lines," Goldbarth's poems often rely on self-reference, which seems freshest when it is also self-revelatory. This is the case in a poem like "The Sign," during which the possibility of reflecting on a prostate biopsy "seemed an inexhaustible jinx—to fix this thing / in written language, offered publicly." Yet the threat of jinx doesn't deter the Goldbarth-persona in his travels through both personal relationships and a variety of quoted, parenthetically-cited sources. Although occasionally veering toward caricature in his contact with human subjects, Goldbarth's long poems also read as truthful defenses of metaphor, anthropomorphism and the "pathetic" fallacy. With a volume in which so much is included, the poet doesn't need to inform us that he seeks to convert his mass of available narrative into enlightening Goldbarth-energy. --Marty Hebrank

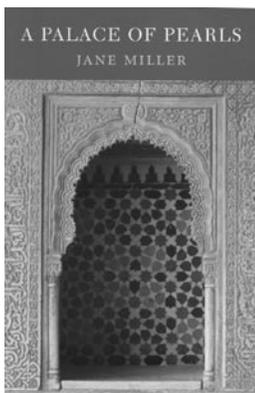
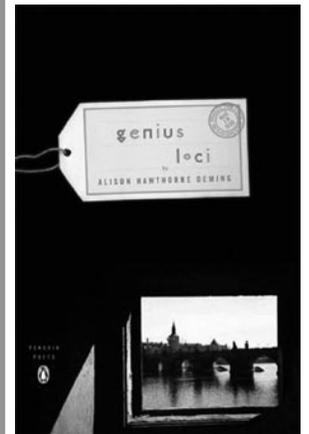


**Matt Hart**  
*Who's Who Vivid*, Slope Editions, forthcoming Fall 2005

Matt Hart's first book, *Who's Who Vivid* forthcoming from Slope Editions, explodes across the page. Words crash into each other and seem to say "excuse me" briefly before crashing away with an emotional exuberance for the sad, sad no longer seems sad: "We sob all evening over glitter on the floor." The speaker confesses with confident self-deprecation, "My mind, I'm convinced, is a shotgun: / prone to do damage at all the wrong times" and tells his "apartment, I am a tiger. I am an iron." This is a cartoon world made of concrete objects moving with a momentum that carries the mind and emotions to the end of the book where we wake as remembering snippets from a combined dream. --Michael Rerick

**Alison Hawthorne Deming**  
*Genius Loci*, Penguin Book, 2005

In her third book of poems, Deming explores the spirit of place. Like much of her poetry and creative nonfiction essays, the work in *Genius Loci* grounds itself in a vast knowledge, and deep appreciation for humanity and the earth from which it has grown. While science is given space, Deming's respect and love for culture and community receive most of her attention. Love poems abound, honoring her partner, friends, and colleagues in science and writing circles. When she, in "Under the Influence of Ironwoods," speaks of the natural world's "confusion of microlives in the soil," one can easily feel she too means us: our personal histories, our clash of cultures, our haunting of the world around us. The long title poem near the end of this ninety-page collection is a masterful formation. "Genius Loci," grew out of Deming's recent experiences in the Czech Republic where she investigates place: a Nazi era North Bohemia ghetto, Prague's art museums, monasteries, and architecture. In *Genius Loci* one can see, especially in the title poem, a new form rising, a spirit of place whirling upward and out, touching shapes left and right, converting the writer, her readers, and the places in between. --Jeremy Frey

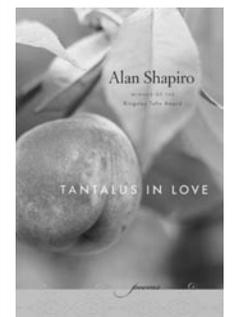


**Jane Miller**  
*A Palace of Pearls*, Copper Canyon Press, 2005

*A Palace of Pearls*, Jane Miller's recent inspiration and the title of this book length series, is both a fortress and pleasure palace. Based upon the Middle Age Arab kingdom of Al-Andalus, this book investigates "a model for ethnic tolerance..." and its downfall in the face of the Spanish inquisition. Similarly, Miller follows Federico García Lorca's relationship to these Moorish legends and his own political assassination. Formally, these poems move between rooms. From personal and highly intimate spaces to political, artistic, and religious arenas, Miller characteristically announces the arrival of 21st century poetics and our own fragile Palace of Pearls. Most impressive is Miller's almost physical stride through the book. The poems' quick-witted narrative and associational techniques, while undermining a more meditative quality, exert themselves upon the reader. Miller does not dwell in these poems, but continuously topples and rebuilds them before our eyes. We become part of that process as readers and citizens; contributing to the collective and disappearing memory of our own time and place. --Dawn Pendergast

**Alan Shapiro**  
*Tantalus in Love*, Houghton Mifflin, 2005

Alan Shapiro mines Greek and Roman mythology in this book of poems about the breakdown of a twenty-year marriage. Shapiro's strength is his ability to weave these myths into the present, creating a new and intensely personal cloth. The Tantalus of Shapiro's title appears from the underworld of *The Odyssey*, sentenced to an eternity beneath a fruit tree which he cannot reach, surrounded by water he cannot drink. *Tantalus in Love* meditates on pleasure, happiness and love as objects of desire. Like the Tantalus of his title, Shapiro sees what we want so clearly and so close, but finds it always out of reach. Ultimately it is this power of the eye to see that affirms the possibility of love and transcends the cycle of desire and frustration: "Love, fill our eyes / all up with seeing! / Let there be never again / a moment in which / your sudden shining isn't / sudden as it rends / the dark we walk in." --Anna Fulford



**SUMMER CLASSES**

Registrations are still being accepted for:

**Natural Selection: Poetic Ancestry as Traced through the Animal Poem with Dawn Pendergast and Paul Klinger**, Saturdays, July 2 through August 6, 2005, 2-4 p.m., \$150  
<http://www.animalpoems.net/>

**Poetry Manuscript Workshop with Barbara Cully**, Wednesdays, July 13 through August 17, 2005, 6-8 p.m., \$150 plus three books (to be announced, will be available at Antigone Books)

For more information or to register for classes visit [www.poetrycenter.arizona.edu/classes.html](http://www.poetrycenter.arizona.edu/classes.html) or call Michael Rerick at (520)626-3765.

**CULTURE QUEST SUMMER CAMP**



The University of Arizona offers CULTURE QUEST a week-long exploration of art, nature and science. Spend a full day of discovery at five campus locations: UA Museum of Art, Manduca Project, Arizona State Museum, UA Poetry Center and Flaundrau Science Center.

CULTURE QUEST offers 3 fantastic sessions for campers entering grades 2-5:  
 July 11-15, 2005: 8:30am to 4:30pm, for children entering 4th & 5th grade  
 July 18-22, 2005: 8:30am to 4:30pm, for children entering 2nd & 3rd grade  
 July 25-29, 2005: 8:30am to 4:30pm, for children entering 4th & 5th grade

For more information or to register your child call Lisa Hastreiter-Lamb at 520/621-7567 or go to: <http://artmuseum.arizona.edu/f99education.shtml>.

**Surrealism USA**

Phoenix Art Museum and The Poetry Center present

**Surrealism Live: Poetry Reading**  
**Dean Young and Matt Hart**  
**Thursday, September 1 at 7 p.m.**  
**Phoenix Art Museum**  
**1625 N. Central Ave. (NE corner of Central & McDowell)**

Surrealism, one of the most revolutionary artistic and intellectual movements of the 20th century, still exerts its influence today. Join us to celebrate surrealism with contemporary poets Dean Young and Matt Hart. Dean Young has been described as one of America's foremost surrealist poets; he has published six collections of poetry, most recently *Elegy on a Toy Piano* (2005). Matt Hart is a co-founder and editor of *Forklift Ohio: A Journal of Poetry, Cooking, & Light Industrial Safety*. His first book of poems, *Who's Who Vivid*, is forthcoming from Slope Editions. Admission is free.

This reading is held in conjunction with **Surrealism USA**, an exhibition of 120 paintings, sculptures and works on paper by the leading surrealist artists working in America from about 1930 to 1950. Surrealism USA will be on exhibit from June 5 – September 25, 2005.

For more information, contact the Poetry Center at 520-626-3765, or visit [poetrycenter.arizona.edu](http://poetrycenter.arizona.edu) or contact the Phoenix Art Museum at 602-257-1880, or visit [www.phxart.org](http://www.phxart.org).



Maurynne Maxwell and Taylor Johnson are Visiting Poets for Preschool and Kindergarten Classes. They have been teaching this spring from the Center's *Poetry for Young Children* curriculum at Drachman Elementary, Hudlow Elementary, Reynolds Elementary, Richey Elementary, and Sunnyside Head Start. *Poetry for Young Children* is in its final stages of development. Thanks to permissions coordinator Sally Masteller and volunteers Pat Cadigan and Ann Laughlin, we hope to have the 38-lesson curriculum, written by poet Gillian Jerome, ready for publication and available to the public this fall.

### The Blue, Enchanted Garden Hose

So much depends  
upon

the blue,  
enchanted

garden  
hose.

We use it  
to water grass,

to water  
the flowers,

to water  
the plants and bushes,

to wash a car  
if you don't have money,

to spray each other  
and run in the sprinkler,

to get a door all wet,  
and to wash the dog.

*written by students in Mrs. Cynthia's and Mrs. Gillis'  
kindergarten class at Reynolds Elementary*

### Desert Taste

We ate the desert:  
nopalitos with limón and chiles.  
They tasted fresh, salty,  
slippery, gooey-  
like sunshine in our tummies.

*written by students in Debbie Sanford's  
preschool class at Sunnyside Head Start.*



*Visiting Poet Maurynne Maxwell with students in Mrs. Nava's kindergarten class at Hudlow Elementary.*



*Visiting Poet Taylor Johnson with students in Mrs. Donnelly's kindergarten class at Reynolds Elementary.*

### Cradle of the Water

We love to swim in the soft water  
like the ocean, like a bed,  
like being held by clouds.

If you make a wish on the water,  
it will hold you like a mother,  
like a hug.

*written by students in Mrs. Skaggs kindergarten class at Hudlow Elementary*

*In Epistles*

*Artaud dies*

and his dying sinks like snow. Like spit and glue, who drinks it. Who would not like to know that glass? That after dinner he poured half out. Lighting each piece of snow on the windowsill, he placed an empty glass on the windowsill.

*He drinks*

and half of it sits in itself. On a night like this. With no human shape. Snow goes down to death out there. I read *TheI* and it goes down. The train comes, the doors go down, a box of meat drops on the snow.

*Things my hands*

become when I touch him. Slipping my hands underneath his bright head, I said. We are still. Slipped under pinnings of blue holly and polishing. And brave. To say we were, like our bodies were, together, opium under our white arms and legs. In the crevice, froth; we lay like ships. My mouth is as my hands have done.

*The deer here*

hoof the roots at dusk. Soon. It dims the eyelets of trees, swayings, a scree of lights I watch work across the black hills, gleaning. Certain birds scissor the poplars and counting them now is kind of balancing, as we certainly did, fitting the bright snow into a holster. I held you to the mountains and to the train. To hills and hills to see things from. At dusk. What a whipping it does, coming, and the train spits at the sky and I just run.

*Seeing so many things lay about*

the white dogs wipe their gums on the trees, things exploded, and snow on the breezeway. At the funeral they say 'just look at that sky' and beside the sky, birds, growing out of snow. They are hardly birds. The birds away.

*When the executioner's tired*

he sleeps on the rack. Wears the chains on his head like a wig. Then I touch his hair. We put our clothes on, coats on, on the snow on our heads. He is having things put on and off us. It is tiring. Someone should be here, if not you, please. The small fowl uncurl on the floor and hand it over. He moves through the time like a radio. I wheeze like a radio into his ear.

*Not a real deer,*

but I swerve and Look someone says. A deer. And we hauled the body down a ditch. It snowed. Our coats, covered with hard brown hairs. Which lit the snow. Who did not want to carry it? Who plugged his hands in his pockets, fiddled a little, and looked.

*If he is seeds*

or shapes cut from paper. If he chewed through snow like that. If a newspaper bangs the door each morning and I turn around like he is doing now and rise.

*I would wield a large pair of scissors*

two eyes, two holes big enough for his fingers and send him back to fields first. And still. In the showy sun and what dust on our hands, we ran them diagonal through stiff white wheat. To be here shearing the last stalks off and polishing and pocketing all of the stones. The dogs are almost upon us. They're closing in the resemblance of fields and it's dark. It's very dark in the small kitchen. I would slip my hands underneath the new world and ask if snow is instead. If this is what we said about snow.

*By counting*

the train sayings. Saying smoke to the trees. Say snow to the rooms bearing tender flowers. I move about in houseslippers. I am. It is too much to look through or do. I promenade through the doorways, eat meat, lay like a spade until then.

*He says so*

*he looks so small* from so far. Parting the windows on Sunday. Popping out. From then on calling distant as sparrowprints, the two of us at perfect opposites. He cannot tie things to his mind. What flails, his hands in here his hair where things left off, is not right. And people calling, small as sticks, up to him. *Something*, He does not hear.

*He tells me to move*

in my sleep and I do. The better to hulk about in the snow, a small white dog drawing the leash. A mouth of a mouse opens—it is the way he hands himself a little seed. It is alright. With the moths strung from their fixtures, as with something starting to burn. A paperboy bangs his hat on the stoop. This dark under a dress. This.

*—what a firm world we have*

clapping, and the radio spinning like snow over it. How I look to you, in the iron eye. The beginning of a thing is my eye signing, is like turning over the surface of words. Flat yes flat. But to look at you is just. Like someone else with my dress on and you are someone too tonight. Who says things. Who listens in.

*I am in*

my mother's teal nightgown. Watch it. Watch the belt hit my ribs. The smell, it gives off. Then your left hand slipped me apart so I put this on. I think of your latest request and a cherry cupboard. I put you in the cupboard. You, withal my smallness, might you be alone in there. My mother's nightgown wears me out and you distinguish it in the evening. You look seemingly for the bull.

*There are locusts*

in the blue field, soaked hummingbirds, his skinny arm along my shoulders. His arm called lightning—there are locusts going off like fire, spitting, a sequence of maneuvers, a place in a pound of water, houses, going on, knotted, all of this, to listen to that. Still.

a selection of recent acquisitions in the Poetry Center archive  
compiled and annotated by Kathryn Wagner

*Refusing Heaven* by Jack Gilbert / Published by Alfred A. Knopf

Jack Gilbert's fourth book of poetry explores the passing of time and the loss of two great loves ("Longing for / her and dreaming of the other one"), as he continues to "refuse heaven," instead preferring life, and the way his "heart carols sometimes, / and other times yearns. Sometimes is quiet / and other times is powerfully quiet."

*Weather Eye Open* by Sarah Gridley / Published by University of California Press

Sarah Gridley's poems move by way of windy, associative, leaps grounded in metaphor. Her first book adopts the emblem of a windmill, as the poet seeks to explore the balance between home and homesickness, love and loss, spirit and matter. She writes, "Have I considered the windmills long enough to say I prefer them / as spectacles to lilies? In fact / the practical lens was preceded (naturally) by Chaucer's figurative / use of spectacle -- / the lens through which a thing is viewed. Which begs the / question: are we moved by windmills, / or through them?"

*The Lives of Rain* by Nathalie Handal / Published by Interlink Books

Palestinian-American poet Nathalie Handal's poems explore truth and witness both geographically and emotionally. "And the memory of / a bullet through / her uniform was left / nothing more of her." In the forward, Carolyn Forché writes: "Her subject is memory and forgetting, the precariousness of identity and the fragility of human community; it is the experience of suffering without knowledge of its end."

*Luck is Luck* by Lucia Perillo / Published by Random House

*Luck is Luck* contains witty, adventurous "tragicomedy" poems. Perillo seeks humor in everyday life situations. "Here's what happens: the tongue knocks on the palate / before lying down in the jaw's own swamp, then the ow-sound flies from the nest box of the throat, / and the self ends up a doofus, standing there / breathing with an open mouth."

*The Waiting* by Megan Johnson / Published by the University of Iowa Press

Megan Johnson's poems are derived from sound and music, as evident in her first book *The Waiting*. She writes, "Twilight thicket, ye arms are a badass melody / marking this quicksilver pleasure, wrapped in / the waves of sea. I think it screams. But / sultry, to be honest."

*Circle* by Victoria Chang / Published by Southern Illinois Press

"To wait is to want more. / Or to *think* you want more. / Take a look backyard for the stitches / that seam everything together," begins Victoria Chang's widely acclaimed first book of poetry. Chang, who was a runner-up for the Poetry Center's summer residency, writes about her family, Edward Hopper, and cultural piety. Her narrative is rich with metaphor bordering on the erotic.

*Cooling Time* by C.D. Wright / Published by Copper Canyon Press

Fans of C.D. Wright will be pleasantly surprised by her latest book *Cooling Time*, which seeks to merge poetry, memoir and essay by way of American idioms and historic traditions. This book is Wright's response to poets living and working today. She writes, "Poets should / be willing to exploit the rind of narrativity, and be more than / willing to be lost at the heart. Exceptional intellection is being / exercised to decry narrative. I am not learning much from that / line of refutation."

*(continued from front page)*

Over the next 18 months, while construction ensues and we continue to raise the remaining \$1.5 million needed to complete the project, we will prepare for the move into the new building. With the expertise of our new librarian Rodney Phillips (see page 3), we'll begin to map out the Rare Book Room and reintegrate into the collection the 25,000 books held in offsite storage. Literary Director Frances Sjoberg and Program Coordinator Christine Krikliwy will turn their attention to program initiatives that have been on hold for several years, including activities for school and community groups who will enjoy greater access to the collection in the Helen S. Schaefer building. And in the next year and half, my accessory of choice will be a hard hat.

Before I close, on a personal note, I want to express my thanks to Dean Tatum; to Dennis Evans, Associate Dean for External Affairs, whose efforts on behalf of the Poetry Center are legion; and to the College's public affairs coordinator Suzanne Jameson for the extraordinary designs which commemorate this occasion. And above all, thanks to the many donors and friends whose support and commitment have brought us to this joyful day.

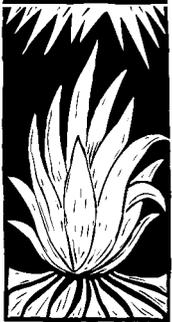


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