

# PoetryWest

## The Muse News

### June 2011

#### Meeting

Poetry West meets from 10:00 a.m. to noon the first Saturday of every month. Our next meeting/workshop is June 4, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., at the **Casa Verde Commons House**, 1355 Lindenwood Grove, 80907. [www.poetrywest.org](http://www.poetrywest.org) for map.

#### Workshop Description

##### **Fawn Bell & Ashley Crockett: “Hear the Voice of the Bard”**

For our June meeting, **Fawn Bell & Ashley Crockett** will lead us through a series of exercises based on the first stanza of William Blake’s “Introduction” to *Songs of Experience*. Bring paper and pen, as you prepare to explore your poetry, influences and motivation -- to ask yourself, “Am I a bard?” The last hour will be devoted to sharing our responses, and getting to know ourselves and each other better through the poems we create.

**Fawn Bell** has been a member of Poetry West for almost six years. There are many parallels, she finds, between her career in landscape architecture and the art form of poetry. She is appreciative of the society of poets in the Pikes Peak region.

**Ashley Crockett** is long-time attendee/member of Poetry West. She currently serves on the PW Board as a member-at-large and edited the newsletter last year. She hosts a casual weekly gathering called “At the Table with Poetry West” on Sundays from 5 – 7 pm at Poor Richard’s Bookstore, 320 North Tejon Street, Colorado Springs, 80903: (719) 578-0012. Ashley is a critically-acclaimed actress, often seen on local stages; she is also a performance poet. She’s honored to assist Fawn Bell in this month’s workshop.

#### Musings

Poet Laureate **Jim Ciletti** requests contact information, including any blog/website details, from PW members. If you are interested, please contact him at [jimciletti@comcast.net](mailto:jimciletti@comcast.net).

#### Website: Member Profiles

If you are interested in listing further information about yourself, via hyperlink, on the Poetry West website, please send your name/contact information, a bio/bibliography (not to exceed 75 words), sample poetry not to exceed 40 lines (this can include short poems or, say, two long ones), and statements as to whether you mentor poetry and/or give readings/workshops. Submit information to [contactpoetrywest@gmail.com](mailto:contactpoetrywest@gmail.com), with MEMBER INFO in the subject line.

## **PW Email Address**

Poetry West now has an email address for anyone needing further information about PW or any of its events: [contactpoetrywest@gmail.com](mailto:contactpoetrywest@gmail.com).

## **Calls for Submissions**

From Poets & Writers: 25 new magazines looking for submissions:

[http://www.pw.org/explore/new/literary\\_magazine](http://www.pw.org/explore/new/literary_magazine)

Check out new listings on *Poets & Writers* Small Press Database:

[http://www.pw.org/small\\_presses](http://www.pw.org/small_presses)

## **Blissfest333**

There is still room for a few more poets for the October 16<sup>th</sup> line-up t Venue 515 in Manitou Springs, 6-9:30 pm (515 Manitou Blvd.). Each poet will have 10 minutes to perform poetry, poetry collaboration with music, etc. Blissfest is an annual collaboration of artists working in all media to raise money for charitable organizations. Contact [julianza@comcast.net](mailto:julianza@comcast.net), Michael Bliss, [michaelbliss333@yahoo.com](mailto:michaelbliss333@yahoo.com), and/or visit [www.Blissfest333.com](http://www.Blissfest333.com) for additional information. We are also trying to secure all of the walls of Marika's Coffeehouse for visual art during the months of September and October. Please stay tuned for more information upcoming in this newsletter.

## **Open Mics**

Goddess Open Mic

Formerly at Black Cat Books, this group now meets at Marika's Coffeehouse, 739 Manitou Ave., on the first and third Mondays of each month, from 7 – 9pm. Karen Sucharski is the event facilitator. For further information contact [kalikookalehua@aol.com](mailto:kalikookalehua@aol.com) or Marika's, 685-4438.

The Colorado Springs Writers Series

This open mic, hosted by Abby Murray, has a new home – the Business of Art Center, 513 Manitou Blvd., in Manitou Springs. Readings are now the second Friday of every month. Both poetry and fiction are welcomed. CSWRS will feature Julaina Aragon Fatula, the author of *Crazy Chicana in Catholic City*, on June 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm. For further information visit [www.cswritersreading.blogspot.com](http://www.cswritersreading.blogspot.com).

## **Regional Happenings**

### **Aspen Workshop with Nikki Finney**

June 19-24 is the date for a juried poetry workshop with poet and fiction writer Nikki Finney in Aspen, CO.

Applications are now being accepted for the 5-day Juried Poetry Workshop with Nikky Finney in connection with the 35th Aspen Summer Words

Writing Retreat and Literary Festival. The workshop will run from 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. on those dates in Aspen, Colorado.

Finney is a professor of creative writing at the Univ. of Kentucky and the author of three collections of poetry, including *On Wings Made of Gauze*, *Rice* (winner of a PEN America Open Book Award), *The World is Round*, and a collection of stories, *Heartwood*. Her fourth collection of poetry, *Head Off & Split*, was published in the winter of 2011.

"This 5-day poetry workshop offers an intimate class setting (writing classes are limited to 12 students) designed to help you discover your voice, hone your craft, and share your work. This workshop is ideal for students seeking intensive instruction and individualized critique to polish poetry in development."

To apply please visit <http://www.aspenwriters.org>.

Manuscript submission, limited to 10 pages, and a \$25 reading fee are required upon registration. Tuition for the 5-day poetry workshop is \$665.. Full and partial scholarships are available. For more information contact Lauren Lowinger | Student Liaison | [lauren@aspenwriters.org](mailto:lauren@aspenwriters.org) | 970.925.3122, ext #4.

## POETRY PRISM

### Kenneth Fearing: 1902-1961

Political/social-minded poetry is not for everyone (if not for you, skip to last poem). Novelist and poet Kenneth Fearing's writings deal with the urban, mechanized society, a world he perceives and paints in a macabre light. The "angry writing of a man who sees vividly...feels vividly" and which is "not pleasant, ...not musical," as critics have written, is a synthesis of ecclesiastic diction and modern cant (slang, the imagery of pulp fiction, advertising, etc.), and focuses on capitalism's down-side.

In *Aphrodite Metropolis*, he playfully blurs boundaries that divide pastoral lyricism from the the context of modern mass media, in a parody combining romanticism and tawdriness:

*He has strong arms, from the warehouse/And on Sunday.../he doesn't say:/What will your chastity amount to when your flesh withers in a little while?"/No,/On Sunday, when they picnic... /they look at the Sunday paper:/GIRL SLAYS BANKER-BETRAYER/They spread it around on the grass/BATH-TUB STIRS JERSEY ROW/...then they sit down on it, nice.../... they kiss in the emerald meadows....*

In "Jack Knuckles Falters," reflecting on Knuckles' plea of innocence before execution, Fearing interrupts the prisoner's last words with headlines that report the man's doom, but moves on, depicting the media's impersonal nature:

*..."I AM AN INNOCENT MAN," DECLARES KNUCKLES/Declare before God..POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION CLINCHED/never saw the dead man in all my life./BODY PLUNGES AS CURRENT KILLS /Swear to you with my last breath/...EARTHQUAKE REPORTED IN PERU.*

Fearing was, a seer, a visionary, like many poets. "X minus X" envisions our cultural moment where everything that once stood against the commodity form – nature, the body, customs – has been disseminated by capitalism's opprobrium:

*Even when your friend, the radio, is still; even when/her dream, the magazine, is finished;/even when/his life, the ticker, is silent; even when/their destiny, the boulevard is bare;/And after that paradise, the dance-hall, is closed.../Still there will be your desire, and hers...*

Desire circulates through radios, magazines, dance-halls, theaters, etc.; Fearing uses black humor and burlesque, often via anaphora, the direct address to "you," the reader, to make his point more real, immediate. For instance, *Ad*, composed on the evening of the US' entry into WWII, lambasts advertising discourse:

*WANTED: Men. Millions of men are WANTED AT ONCE in a big field;/NEW, TREMENDOUS, THRILLING, GREAT./If you've been a figure in the chamber of horrors, If you've ever escaped from a psychiatric ward./YOU ARE THE VERY MAN WE WANT ..."*

*Dirge* is an onomatopoetic poem about the robotic-life, not of the factory worker, but of the white-collared, in which the disintegration into the nonsensical, comic language conveys the senselessness of the starry-eyed worker's situation, the irony of investing in individuality which, in the end, entails nothing more than mortifying repetition -- futility.

*At the same he wore one gray tweed suit/walked one short step, took one long look, drew one deep breath,/Just one too many/And wow he died as wow he lived,/Going whop to the office and blooie home to sleep and biff got married and bam had children and oof got fired,/Zowie did he live and zowic did he die.../deeply mourned by the B.M.T./awk, big dipper; bop, summer rain;/Mr. Bong, Mr. Bong, Mr. Bong.*

And then there's this! – left in its entirety just because someone strongly resembling myself happens to be an incorrigible romantic with a funny bone:

### **Love 20 cents the First Quarter Mile**

All right. I may have lied to you and about you, and made a few pronouncements a bit too sweeping, perhaps, and possibly forgotten to tag the bases here or there, And damned your extravagance, and maligned your tastes, and libeled your relatives, and slandered a few of your friends, O. K.,  
Nevertheless, come back.

Come home. I will agree to forget the statements that you issued so copiously to the neighbors and the press,  
And you will forget that figment of your imagination, the blonde from Detroit;  
I will agree that your lady friend who lives above us is not crazy, bats, nutty as they come, but on the contrary rather bright,  
And you will concede that poor old Steinberg is neither a drunk, nor a swindler, but simply a guy, on the eccentric side, trying to get along.

(Are you listening, you bitch, and have you got this straight?)

Because I forgive you, yes, for everything. I forgive you for  
being beautiful and generous and wise,  
I forgive you, to put it simply, for being alive, and pardon  
you, in short, for being you.

Because tonight you are in my hair and eyes,  
And every street light that our taxi passes shows me you  
again, still you,  
And because tonight all other nights are black, all other hours  
are cold and far away, and now, this minute, the stars are  
very near and bright.

Come back. We will have a celebration to end all celebrations.  
We will invite the undertaker who lives beneath us, and a  
couple of boys from the office, and some other friends.  
And Steinberg, who is off the wagon, and that  
insane woman who lives upstairs, and a few reporters, if  
anything should break.

Kenneth Fearing's poetry collections include *Angel Arms, Poems, Dead Reckoning: A Book of Poetry, Afternoon of a Pawnbroker and Other Poems, Stranger at Coney Island and Other Poems.*  
*Review by Julie Shavin*

## End Rhyme

*The smell of ink is intoxicating to me - others may have wine, but I have poetry.*

~Terri Guillemets