

# PoetryWest

## The Muse News

November 2011

{Many thanks to Suzanne Segady and Ashley Crockett for our newsletters this term, and now to Loring Wirbel, our current VP, for this, his first newsletter! I am sending this out for LW until he creates his Poetry West address book. Jz}

### Meeting

Poetry West meets from 10:00 a.m. to noon the first Saturday of every month. Our upcoming workshop is November 5, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Room 213 in the Worner Center, Colorado College, second floor.

#### “Letters in a Box”

**Facilitator: Martin Balgach**

When asked during an interview to define the elusive and controversial prose poem, Michael Benedikt offered this observation: “A form of poetry self-consciously written in prose, yet characterized by the conscious, intense use of all the devices of verse poetry – except for strict meter; rhyme; and the line break.” (sic re semi-colons) Although Benedikt’s description is technically accurate, I prefer Baudelaire’s conception of the prose poem and its lure:

“Which of us, in his ambitious moments, has not dreamed of the miracle of a poetic prose – musical, but without [conventional] rhythm and rhyme, and supple enough to adapt itself to the lyrical impulses of the soul, the undulations of the psyche, the prompting of the unconscious?”

We will explore how the clearly-defined yet seemingly boundless prose poem resembles and conveys our sub-conscious poetic impulses. We will look to masters and practitioners of prose poetry such as Zbigniew Herbert, James Wright, Killarney Clary, and Carsten René Nielsen for launching points into discussions, and three writing exercises that will help us understand how the prose poem embodies the poet’s associative, intuitive, musical, and narrative instincts.

Martin Balgach’s poetry and criticism have appeared in *The Bitter Oleander*, *Cream City Review*, *Fogged Clarity*, *The Puritan*, *Opium Magazine*, *Rain Taxi*, and elsewhere. A current contributor to the literary blog *Numéro Cinq* and former associate editor with *Many Mountains Moving*, he holds an MFA from Vermont College, works in publishing, and lives near Boulder, Colorado. More of his work can be found at [www.martinbalgach.com](http://www.martinbalgach.com).

## MUSINGS

### **"Poetry While You Wait" Returns** (Call for Submissions; also, see below)

Pikes Peak Poet Laureate **Jim Ciletti** announces the return of the "Poetry While You Wait" journal:

Poets and poetry lovers – now is the time to submit your original poems to the Pikes Peak Poet Laureate Project for the next "Poetry While You Wait" poetry booklet. Submission is free and open to all residents, adults and children, of El Paso and Teller counties. This year, poems will be considered in English and foreign languages. If you wish to submit your poems in a foreign language, include your original foreign language poem and its English translation. All forms (free verse, blank verse, etc.) will be considered for publication. You may submit up to five poems, 30 lines or shorter, and suitable for public consumption, in the body of one e-mail, not an attachment, to poet@pikespeakpoetlaureate.org, or mail to Jim Ciletti, Poet Laureate, 1215 N. Union, Colorado Springs, 80909. Deadline is December 1, 2011. Please include your postal and e-mail address and phone number and a one-line bio with your submission. "Poetry While You Wait" will be published in Spring and distributed to waiting rooms, like your doctor's or dentist's office, tire stores, auto repair shops, beauty salons, barber shops, etc. – wherever there is a waiting area. Contact Jim Ciletti – (719) 634-2367.

Stay tuned for information on a city-wide poetry reading organized by the Poet Laureate's office, and for the process in 2012 to name a new Pikes Peak Poet Laureate.

### **Colorado Poets' Center**

This site has many interesting links. You might be interested in clicking on Announcements. The following is one example:

#### **Making a Poetry Book**

There are 27 points to consider in Jeffrey Levine's article "On Making the Poetry Manuscript." See it at <http://jeffreylevine.com/2011/10/12/on-making-the-poetry-manuscript/>.

#### **PPAC Awards**

Based on judging by two separate juries attending events throughout the past year, The Pikes Peak Arts Council honored Janice Gould as Literary Poet of the Year, and Julie Shavin as Performance Poet of the Year at its annual awards ceremony on Sept. 23rd. Gould holds a dazzling number of degrees, including a Ph.D. in English from the University of New Mexico. Her poetry has been awarded fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and from the Astraea Foundation. She currently teaches classes

in Native American literature and culture, Native American Philosophies, and Native and Indigenous Perspectives on Museums. Shavin, a former journalist, holds degrees in English and Philosophy, with special emphasis in Music Composition. She graduated from Emory University, Atlanta and the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. She has been reading/performing poetry at least five times monthly over the past four years, facilitates The Live and Breathe open mic, and works as an editor and proofreader. To view PPAC results, visit <http://www.coloradosprings.com/articles/arts-12161-awards-dance.html>. The Council, in addition to many other activities/promotions of art, is still offering 2 grants a month to artists working in various media. Please contact [ppac@pikespeakartscouncil.org](mailto:ppac@pikespeakartscouncil.org) for more information.

### **CC Visiting Writers Series Events**

Thursday, Nov. 3rd, 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m: **Martin Amis**, Richard Celeste Theatre of the Cornerstone Arts Center, CC 825 N. Cascade Free.  
Cost: Free, Information: Worner Desk, (719) 389-6607

**Martin Amis**, son of British author Sir Kingsley Amis, has achieved global recognition since publishing his first novel, *The Rachel Papers*, in 1973, which received the Somerset Maugham Award. He was named by The Times of London as one of the 50 greatest British writers since 1945. He appears at CC courtesy of the Demarest Lloyd Lecture Fund for the Humanities.

### **Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region Events**

**Thursday, Nov. 3, 7:00 p.m.:** Book Signing: A Victorian Mansion in the Colorado Rockies: The Estemere Estate at Palmer Lake, Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts, 304 Highway 105, Palmer Lake: Free.

Authors **Dan Edwards** and **Roger Ward** preview the architectural and social history of a unique 19th-century mansion. Learn about Estemere's many owners and families. The book and DVD will be available for purchase at the book signing. Information: [www.palmerdividehistory.org](http://www.palmerdividehistory.org) and [www.trilakesarts.org](http://www.trilakesarts.org).

**Saturday, Nov. 5, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.:** American Association of University Women Authors' Day, Garden of the Gods Club, 3320 Mesa Road, Colorado Springs. Cost: \$60 general public, \$50 AAUW CS Chapter members, \$40 AAUW student members.

Spend the day with four engaging local authors. AAUW invites you to enjoy a morning snack and delicious lunch at the Garden of the Gods Country Club and hear Cynthia Nimerichter, Joyce Lohse, Jacqueline Lundquist, and Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estes share their works. Proceeds benefit local AAUW scholarships. Information: (719) 685-1589.

**Saturday, Nov. 5, 2-4 p.m.**, Book Signing with **Holli Pfau**: *Pure Gold: Adventures with Six Rescued Golden Retrievers*. Poor Richard's Bookstore, 320 N. Tejon, Colorado Springs. Free.

Colorado resident Holli Pfau is the co-founder of PAT, a program of animal-assisted therapy that became a national model. She will sign copies of her new book, *Pure Gold*. A portion of her book sales will be donated to the Teller County Regional Animal Shelter. Information: (719) 578-0012.

**Tuesday, Nov. 8, 5 - 8 p.m.**: "When Cultures Collide," with novelist **Terry Marshall**, Colorado College, Gates Common Room, Third Floor of Palmer Hall. Free.

The Pikes Peak Library District and Colorado Springs Diversity Forum present "bleeding heart liberal activist" novelist Terry Marshall and conservative cartoonist-illustrator **Chuck Asay**, who have collaborated on the new book *Soda Springs: Love, Sex, and Civil Rights?* They will speak on the importance of civility in accepting a range of perspectives. Light refreshments will be served. Information: (719) 531-6333 x 1212.

## **Calls for Submissions**

### **"Snakeskin" Plans "Found Poetry" Issue**

Jessy Randall (<http://personalwebs.coloradocollege.edu/~jrandall/writer.html>) will guest-edit the February 2012 issue of the online poetry magazine "Snakeskin" (<http://snakeskin.org.uk>). The theme this year is **FOUND POETRY**. Please send up to six found poems to [jessyrandall@yahoo.com](mailto:jessyrandall@yahoo.com). No previously-published poems. Simultaneous submissions are allowed. No attachments, please – poems should be in the body of the email. The deadline is December 15.

Jessy says, "I prefer found poems that didn't start out as literary text. In other words, if you take someone else's meant-to-be-lyrical prose and simply add line breaks, that is less interesting to me than if you 'find' something that wasn't meant to be lyrical or literary at all and, by 'finding' it, turn it into something literary. For me, part of the fun of a found poem is knowing the source, so please include something about that in your submission. (For more information about found poetry, try <http://www.foundpoetryreview.com/about#FoundPoetryDefinition>.)

**KAFM, Out & About and the Writers' Forum** would like to publish your poems, seventeen lines or under, and to invite you to read two poems on the air. Poets are being aired thrice daily and published weekly. Send poems or questions to [writersforum@bresnan.net](mailto:writersforum@bresnan.net) or call 256-4662. We're really enjoying all your voices and are always looking for new ones.

## **Metric Moment**

This section showcases any PW member, with a very short poem. Submit yours to

lwirbel@comcast.net.

The radio plays a stereophonic opera,  
staggering pauses  
between the diva parts  
and into this oral tumble steals  
daily chaos  
agile as a butterfly through  
a broken window

- Robert Gorham

## Open Mics

**Colorado Springs Writers Reading Series** – Abby Murray hosts this monthly series the second Friday of every month. The next will take place on Nov. 11, 7:30 pm, at Business of Arts Center Main Gallery, 513 Manitou Blvd., in Manitou Springs. The featured poet this month will be **Sandy Tseng**, author of "Sediment" and teacher at Metro State in Denver. An open mic precedes Sandy's featured reading. Suggested donation is \$2 per person. Enjoy some wine or beer at the bar during intermission and get to know local writers. Further information: [cswritersreading@gmail.com](mailto:cswritersreading@gmail.com) or <http://cswritersreading.blogspot.com>.

**The Live and Breathe (Poetry) Society** – First and third Mondays of every month at Marika's Coffee House, 739 Manitou Ave., Manitou Springs, facilitated by Julie Shavin. [julianza@comcast.net](mailto:julianza@comcast.net) or Marika's: 685-4438

**At the Table with Poetry West** – This casual critique group meets at Poor Richard's Bookstore every Sunday from 5 to 7 p.m. The event is a meet, eat, drink, and listening happening; you are invited to bring a few copies of a work-in-progress for critique.

**Haiku Society of America**'s local chapter meets the third Sunday afternoon of each month from 2 to 4 p.m. Their main meeting place is the Mediterranean Café, 118 E. Kiowa, Colorado Springs. Mark your calendars and contact Pat at [RIVERPHOTO@aol.com](mailto:RIVERPHOTO@aol.com) for program and location details, just in case of necessary alternate venue.

**The Modbo**, in the Arts Alley south of Bijou between Tejon and Cascade, across from martini bar 15C: The Modbo has been hosting an open mike 8 to 10 p.m. or beyond, the last Friday of the month, with a featured guest poet included each time. **NOTE: There will be no Modbo poetry Oct., Nov., or December.** Please stay tuned regarding this venue; Modbo curators Lauren and Brett Andrus are working on scheduling.

**Word Wednesdays** at the V-Bar, 19 E. Kiowa St., 8 to 10 p.m., 313-0683, or search Facebook for more info.

**Writers Group:** Weekly meetings with improv exercises to hone skills. Thursdays at 7 p.m. at Barnes & Noble, Briargate, 1565 Briargate Blvd., 266-9960. <http://www.barnesandnoble.com>.

## **POETRY PRISM**

### **Mary Jo Bang's "Louise In Love"**

*The dalliance of spring-  
boards, the lingering impression of an off black blouse.  
Facts, said Ham, too often confide an edifice  
with no hint of what hides behind*

-- That Was All, Louise Said, Except For

Perhaps patience is a virtue, but I have little; one exception regards Louise. And Louise is a brilliant tapestry thumbing its allusions at critical logic. She teases and seduces with image word-play, stealing us from the dulness of modern thought. She forces us to admit sadness can be found in a too-perfect whore, and be felt in the careless chaos heard in a raffish jest. She smirks innocent and pretty at our sordid, controlling and oh-so-serious age. Love Louise or not, she cares like the spring. And Mary Jo Bang writes knowing each word is a bauble flirting lovely with the decorum of academic pretense...words, baubles -- cheap and brilliant in a book dense with the secrets of naive affairs. Bang doesn't spare us from the ghosts of love's first trance.

- Robert Gorham

### **Fast-Forward**

On **December 3rd**, our workshop will actually be a holiday-time pot-luck party, and a president of a local poetry organization, both of which will go unnamed, thinks it might be fun to dress up as a December-born poet from any era (cross-dressing allowed), and to bring a poem by that poet, to share. The dish you bring can reflect that era or poet's favorite repast as well. More information in the December newsletter.

### **End-Rhyme**

“The secret to creativity is knowing how to hide your sources.” - Albert Einstein

If you would like to submit a review of a poet's work for the PRISM, please contact [lwirbel@gmail.com](mailto:lwirbel@gmail.com).

Please submit December newsletter items to Loring Wirbel, [lwirbel@gmail.com](mailto:lwirbel@gmail.com), by Nov. 17, 2011.