

THE REAL MILLENNIUM ISSUE!

# Lite

**FREE!**

to residents of  
Baltimore City,  
Annapolis, Bel Air,  
Columbia, Glen Burnie,  
Laurel, Towson, and  
the entire Baltimore  
metropolitan area.

DECEMBER 2000/

JANUARY 2001

## Baltimore's Literary Newspaper



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### TOP STORY

#### The Closing of Baltimore's Small Independent Book Stores

One by one the small storefront bookstores in Baltimore are turning out their lights. A couple of years ago it was the "Raven Bookstore" in Hampden. Then the "Tiber Bookstore" on E. 25<sup>th</sup> Street turned all its retail space into electrons. The building was razed, as was its neighbor the "BNN Bookstore" operated by Larry Krause, to make way for another link in a pharmacy chain. "Broken Wing Bookstore," whose flagship was located on E.

Pratt Street in Upper Fells Point, opened a branch store in Hampden, alleviating the book buyer's grief over the aforementioned "Raven." "The Broken Wing" couldn't fly. It was in the middle of a block on W. 36<sup>th</sup> Street. Parking was a big problem. The lack of a wide inventory was another. There was a small "Hamilton Bookstore" in the 5500 block of Harford Rd for a couple of years. It had a wealth of used paperback novels and genre writing.

It also sold T-shirts and sunglasses. Its demise occurred when its young owner and South American-born wife left to live in Peru. "The Book Miser" in Fells Point, initially an eclectic used bookstore, found it profitable to specialize in ecclesiastical writing. Then it took off for a site with a cheaper rent in Woodlawn. The internet and mail order business were its meat and potatoes. Its owner, though a fine person

*Continued on page 4*

## THANK YOU!

This issue was made possible with grants provided by the Abell Foundation, Parks Sausage Company, American Trading and Production Corporation, Development Credit Fund, Inc., the Maryland State Arts Council, the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Art and Culture, the Harry and Jeannette Weinberg Foundation, and charitable contributions from Lite Circle members, including:

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# Lite

Baltimore's Literary Newspaper  
P.O. Box 26162  
Baltimore, Maryland 21210  
<http://www.toad.net/~pkinlock/lite>

*Editor and Publisher:* David W. Kriebel; *Managing Editor:* Patti Kinlock; *Director of Public Relations:* Dina Feinberg; *Advertising Manager:* David Kriebel; *Assistant to the Publisher:* Colette Fozard; *Assistant Editors:* Samuel I. Beard, Jr., Dan Cuddy, Dina Feinberg, Hilbert H. Turner, Jr.; *News Editor/Calendar Editor:* Dan Cuddy; *Book Review Editor:* W.H. Stevens; *Art Director:* Vonnie Winslow Crist; *Illustrators:* Diana Botteon, Vonnie Crist; *Membership Director:* Patti Kinlock; *Laurel Reading Host:* Hilbert H. Turner, Jr.; *Literary and Distribution Staff:* Pat Barnes, Samuel I. Beard, Jr., David Cookson, Dan Cuddy, Dina Feinberg, Colette Fozard, Patti Kinlock, Stephanie LaMastra, Susan Sweeney, Hilbert H. Turner, Jr.; *Webmistress:* Patti Kinlock; *Photography:* Moira Lachen.

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# Literary December/January

A Bi-Monthly Potpourri of Literary Events

(Watch for more November events in *Lite's* January 2001 Supplement)

### Consecutive Reading Series

Friday, December 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

**7:00 p.m.** Friday Night Music Series and Open Mike. Mariposa Center for Creative Expression, 5000 Berwyn Rd., College Park, MD. Cover \$5. For schedule/info, call (301) 513-9422/(301) 881-8012.

Sunday, December 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

**7:00-10:30 p.m.** The MYTH poetry slam, TEAISM, 400 8th St. NW (corner of 8th and D Sts), Washington, DC. Cover \$5. For program/info, call (202) 638-6010 or email [GalAengus@aol.com](mailto:GalAengus@aol.com).

Tuesday, December 5, 12, 19, 26

**9:00 p.m.** Open Reading at Funk's Democratic Coffee Spot, 1818 Eastern Ave., Fells Point. For more info, call (410) 276-FUNK.

**8:30 p.m.** Tell the World, open mic poetry and spoken word reading at the One World Cafe, 904 S. Charles St., Federal Hill. Hosted by Tom Swiss. For more info, email [tms@infamous.net](mailto:tms@infamous.net) or call (410) 455-5325.

### Literary December

Friday, December 1-Sunday, December 3

**Friday and Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.; Sunday 1:00-5:00 p.m.** Enoch Pratt Free Library Central Branch. Book Sale in the Main Hall.

Friday, December 1

**7:00 p.m.** Bibelot-Timonium. Students from the St. James Academy will read work from their creative writing classes.

Bibelot-Cross Keys. Nick Clarke discusses and signs his book *Alistair Cooke: A Biography*.

Saturday, December 2

**12:00-5:00 p.m.** Mystery Loves Company Bookstore, 1730 Fleet St., will have a day of author signings, gift baskets, prizes at its holiday festival. For more info, call (410) 276-6708.

**1:00-3:00 p.m.** The Greenmount School, Wyman Park Center, 501 W. 30<sup>th</sup> St., hosts its annual December Crafts Fair. For more info, call (410) 461-1616.

Sunday, December 3

**2:00 p.m.** Bibelot-Woodholme. Bonnie Angelo discusses and signs her book *First Mothers: The Women Who Shaped the Presidents*, a group portrait of the 11 women who gave birth to the men who were President during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Monday, December 4

**7:30-9:30 p.m.** Mel Tansill, a public relations practitioner, published poet and adjunct writing professor, will speak to a Howard County high school student writing alliance about "Writing's Influence on Life and Work" at Barnes & Noble, Long Gate Shopping Center, 4300 Montgomery Rd., Ellicott City.

**8:00 p.m.** Downstairs at XandO. SLAMicide! Cover \$5. John Peery and Maia Williams/Roanoke. For more info, call (410) 889-7076 or email [GalAengus@aol.com](mailto:GalAengus@aol.com). (Open mic & slam signups 7:30 p.m.)

Tuesday, December 5

**6:00 p.m.** Bibelot-Timonium. Local authors Brooke Gunning and Molly O'Donovan will sign copies of their books *Towson & The Villages of Ruxton and Lutherville* and *Baltimore's Halcyon Days*. Signing only.

Wednesday, December 6

**7:00 p.m.** Function at the Junction reading series at the Coffee Junction, 803 Frederick Rd., Catonsville. Hiram Larew, Forestine Bynum and Annette Gonzales read their poetry. Open mike follows. For more info, call (410) 719-7717.

**7:30 p.m.** Maryland Poetry Review "Century of the Millennium" reading series at UMBC, the 7<sup>th</sup> floor of the Albin O. Kuhn Library. Melvin Brown, Reginald Harris and Rachel Kibie are the featured readers. Open reading to follow. For more info, call (410) 744-0349.

Thursday, December 7

**8:00 p.m.** Downstairs at XandO. SLAMicide! Georgia Popoff of Syracuse, NY. (Open mic & slam signups 7:30 p.m.) For more info, call (410) 889-7076 or email [GalAengus@aol.com](mailto:GalAengus@aol.com). Cover \$5.

Saturday, December 9

**2:00 p.m.** Bibelot-Cross Keys. Steven Vicchio signs his book *Places of an Examined Life*, essays spun from everyday evens and contemporary issues. Signing only.

**8:00 p.m.**

Release Party-Link 5: HYSTERIA! *Link 5* comes complete with its own CD of sound pieces from around the lobe, pre-

## The Big Literary "Spot" Lites

Bibelot-Canton, 2400 Boston St., Baltimore. Phone: (410) 276-9700.

Bibelot-Cross Keys, 40 Village Square, Baltimore. Phone: (410) 532-8818.

Bibelot-Timonium Crossing, 2080 York Rd. Phone: (410) 308-1888.

Bibelot-Woodholme, 1819 Reisterstown Rd., Pikesville. Phone: (410) 653-6933.

Borders-Columbia, 6151 Columbia Crossing Circle. Phone: (410) 290-0062.

Borders-Towson, 415 York Rd. Phone: (410) 296-0791.

Enoch Pratt Free Library, Central Branch, 400 Cathedral St., Baltimore. Phone: (410) 396-5494/396-5847.

WordHouse Salon at Minas, 733-35 S. Ann St., Fells Point. Phone: (410) 732-4258.

XandO, 3003 North Charles St., Charles Village. Phone: (410) 889-7076.

miered tonight by DJ Alan Rutberg. Contributors reading includes sexologist John Money, performance artist Steve Griffith, multi-media artist David Crandall and poets Megan Wolff, Bill Ferrell. Larval Trading Company premiers new "hysterical" performance. Music by the Octonauts. \$10 or \$18 with issue of *Link 5*. Fells Point Creative Alliance, 413 S. Conkling St. (New location-between Eastern Ave. & Bank St.) For more info, call (410) 276-1651.

Sunday, December 10

**2:00 p.m.** *The Wonder Horse*, poems by Chester Wickwire, the Chaplain Emeritus of Johns Hopkins University. Chester Wickwire, Herman Kemper, Maria Helena Diaz, Ralph Moore, Stephen and Gwynn Howard will read from Reverend Wickwire's book in Levering Hall in the Glass Pavilion on Johns Hopkins University's Homewood campus, 3400 N. Charles St. Music by Rev. Tom Composto. Book signing. Refreshments. Free to the public. Sponsored by the Student Labor Action Committee. For more info, call (410) 825-8949

**4:00-6:00 p.m.** WordHouse at Minas. Poets from the *Maryland Poetry Review* will read poems w/a holiday theme. Open mike follows. New and reading-shy poets encouraged to participate.

Monday, December 11

**7:00 p.m.** Bibelot-Cross Keys. Ted Hendricks from Villa Julie College facilitates a discussion of Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*.

**8:00 p.m.** Downstairs at XandO. SLAMicide! Cover \$5. Georgia Popoff/Syracuse, NY and Jeanne Spicuzza/Los Angeles. For more info, call (410) 889-7076 or email [GalAengus@aol.com](mailto:GalAengus@aol.com). (Open mic & slam signups 7:30 p.m.)

Tuesday, December 12

**7:30 p.m.** *Mrs. Parker from A to B*. Singer/songwriter Niki Lee shares her new passion—a one woman show in progress about Dorothy Parker. Poems, prose and biography of this hard living woman of American letters who championed civil rights, are woven with original music and personal insight. Discussion to follow. \$5 (\$4 members) Fells Point Creative Alliance, 413 S. Conkling St. (New location, between Eastern Ave & Bank St.) For more info, call (410)276-1651.

Friday, December 15

**7:00-10:00 p.m.**

Opening Reception for "A Week In The Life Of Greektown": an exhibition of photographs by Minas Konsolas, Ralph Pickle, Jim Burger, Jed Kirschbaum, Michael Foreman, Adrianna Amari, and Michael Lang. The Fountain of Highlandtown

Gallery, 4519 Eastern Ave. at Macon St. For more info, call (410) 327-5254 or email [Greektown@alvarezfiction.com](mailto:Greektown@alvarezfiction.com).

**8:00 p.m.** Bibelot-Timonium. An Evening of Lite Verse. Poet Barbara DeCesare reads from her work. An open reading follows. For more info, email [lite@toadmail.com](mailto:lite@toadmail.com). Bring a donation of a non-perishable food item for Lite's winter food drive.

Saturday, December 16

**12:00 noon.** Bibelot-Cross Keys. Brooke Gunning and Molly O'Donovan sign copies of their books *Towson & The Villages of Ruxton and Lutherville* and *Baltimore's Halcyon Days*. Signing only.

**2:00 p.m.** Bibelot-Timonium. Carolyn Males, Carol Roinick and Pam Goresh will sign copies of their guidebook *Wish You Were Here! A Guide to Baltimore City for Natives and Newcomers*. Signing only.

**8:00 p.m.** "Dream Baltimore," a performance art benefit for Manna House soup kitchen and clothing depot. A Gimme Shelter Production at the Lovely Lane Church, 2200 Saint Paul St. \$5 admission. For more info, call (410) 462-5734

Sunday, December 17

**4:00 p.m.** Bibelot-Canton. Rafael Alvarez will sign copies of his new book *Orlo and Leini*. Signing only.

Monday, December 18

**7:00 p.m.** Bibelot-Timonium. Ted Hendricks and Lisa O'Shea facilitate a discussion of Plato, *Meno* and *Protagoras*.

Wednesday, December 27

**7:00 p.m.** Bibelot-Canton. Leslie McFarland facilitates a discussion of *Holidays on Ice* by David Sedaris.

Wednesday, January 3

**7:00 p.m.** Function at the Junction reading series at the Coffee Junction, 803 Frederick Rd., Catonsville. Barbara DeCesare, Barrett Warner and Julia Wendell read their poetry. For more info, call (410) 719-7717. Open mic follows.

**Literary January**

Monday, January 8

**8:00 p.m.** Downstairs at XandO. SLAMicide! Cover \$5. Ken Hunt/Boston. For more info, call (410) 889-7076 or email [GalAengus@aol.com](mailto:GalAengus@aol.com). (Open mic & slam signups 7:30 p.m.)

Sunday, January 14

**4:00-6:00 p.m.** WordHouse at Minas.

*Continued on page 5*

## ONE OR MORE WORDS FROM OUR EDITOR

### EDITORIAL

#### The Muse and the Millennium

Here we stand, at the dawn of a new millennium, and hardly anyone cares.

All the apocalyptic Y2K hype of last year, ignorance of the calendar itself—that there was no Year Zero—and fascination with a 4-digit change in year combined to create the impression that January 1, 2000 was the start of the third millennium. Madison Avenue and Hollywood eagerly jumped on the bandwagon, broadcasting the erroneous message with glee, never bothering to worry about pesky little details such as the exact year. As a result many otherwise intelligent people believe we are living in the twenty-first century.

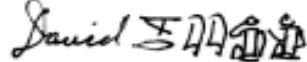
Why should we care? And what does all this have to do with literature, the main concern of this publication?

I could be churlish and answer that last question by saying that everything has to do with literature, that there's no need to define literature, because to do so would be to situate it in a particular cultural frame wrought by contesting subjectivities which only reproduce themselves in a series of historical discontinuities. The irony in such a response is that it actually points to the answer to both questions, namely, that the unconcern about facts is rooted in a philosophical movement which first took root in literature, namely, postmodernism.

I do not say that postmodernism is wholly bad—it is logical to examine truth claims within the context of culture and power relations. However,

a postmodernist approach, taken too far, undermines the very notion of truth itself, to the point in which we cannot say with confidence that we know anything at all. It becomes permissible to play with the facts in such a way that something as apparently objective as the start of a new millennium becomes a matter of opinion. Some, conceding that January 1, 2001 is "technically" the start of the next millennium have proposed that the 2000 date be accepted as an "observed" millennium. This may sound reasonable, yet is it really different from claiming that "4" is the "technical" sum of 2 and 2, allowing some other number to be the "observed" (official) sum? As George Orwell declares in *1984*, "Freedom is the freedom to say that 2 plus 2 equals 4." The other side, the side that allows different answers to objective questions depending on context might find its champions in spokesmen for Big Brother, such as Josef Goebbels, who claimed that "Truth is what serves the German people" or Leon Trotsky who noted that "History is policy projected into the past."

Am I claiming that those who are wrong about the millennium date are crypto-Nazis or communists? Of course not. But I do claim that those who put up with such nonsense help make the task of the Thought Police easier. And that is bad for literature and every free expression of the human spirit.



David W. Kriebel,  
Editor

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## LITERARY NEWS

*Cont. from front cover*

in every other way, was not a "people" person. Avril Haines, who owned "Adrian's Bookstore" originally, sold the store as she concentrated on a law degree. Ms. Haines had made the store a landmark in lower Fells Point. The store was primarily a new book store, with the latest novels and non-fiction off the pages of the *New York Times Book Review* available, but it also carried used books. Her second floor was a cafe. Surrounded by books diners feasted on vegetarian dishes and light fare, sipped coffee or imported tea, relaxed in the genteel setting. Ms. Haines' mother's beautiful oil paintings graced whatever wall space was not covered by book shelves. Downstairs in the bookstore Jean Marie and Daylon greeted customers with genuine warmth. However, Ms. Haines sold the store. The new buyer tried to keep things going but he faced new challenges such as the opening of a Bibelot in Canton and a Barnes & Noble in the Power Plant in the Inner Harbor. The cafe closed first. The bookstore did not replace its stock. The descent to a "For Rent" sign began rapidly. After Adrian's became a wistful thought, the Book Rendezvous, which had thrived in South Baltimore for a couple of years opened a branch a block north and on the other side of the street from Adrian's. It lasted what—two years? Recently, without ceremony, it gave up the ghost.

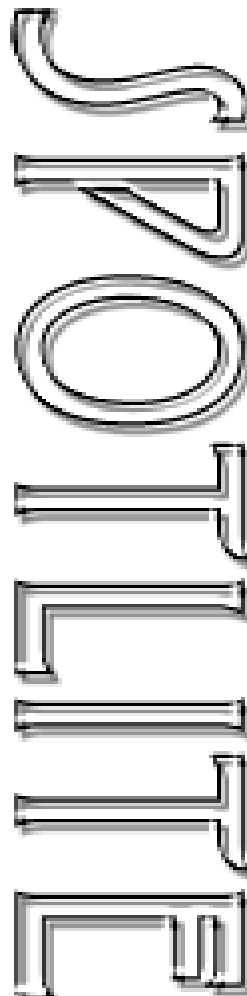
The original "Book Rendezvous" is still on Light Street two block south of the Science Center. There is a branch on N. Calvert Street between Baltimore and Fayette Streets. The Book Rendezvous, which has a wide selection of hardback and paperback volumes, has probably the best prices for the buyer of used books. However, there are rumors that the Book Rendezvous may exit to Pennsylvania in a year or two. Rental prices are changing in Federal Hill. More and more of the book sales come from the Internet. Retail stores are a business. Being in the black, survival, is more important than a nebulous sense of community service, and, when a business serves a wider community, the physical site is not that important. The main thing is to be able to house the books and to be able to ship them by UPS, FedEx, whoever. Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Baltimore, Maryland? They are only incidental postmarks in today's commerce. However, the Book Rendezvous is still located in South Baltimore, and the rumors may just be that—rumors. Time will tell.

"The Broken Wing Bookstore" on E. Pratt Street, which opened after 3 p.m. on weekdays for a couple of hours, and on weekends, recently held a "Close Out" sale. Not much is left on the shelves. From the window one can see a paperback of *Four Plays by Chekhov*, but not much

else. The cherry orchard has been cut down. The seagull flies in the sky overhead, the scavenger that it is.

The Goodwill Store on Belair Rd, a block or so above Erdman Ave., was a couple of years ago a book depository. Granted that much of the literature donated was genre, romance novels in particular, the browser could find gems like Robert Coover's *Gerald's Party* or something by Gore Vidal, or a French-English Dictionary, or a copy of an old Maryland Historical Society Journal. However, within the past year the basement pond of books became a puddle, and recently the basement was closed. The books, or what was left, were moved upstairs on a few shelves in the back, just like every other Goodwill Store. The anomaly is no more.

What is left in Baltimore beside the megastores? "Normals," which has indisputably the widest and best selection of any used bookstore within 25 miles of Baltimore, is still thriving at 420 E. 31<sup>st</sup> Street. The titles on its shelves make a reader drool. It is fortunate to be less than a mile from Johns Hopkins University's Homewood campus. Students, scholars and book-obsessed people frequent the store. Art, architecture, Native American poetry, zoology? Whatever a reader's interest it may be satisfied here. Normals doesn't stock bestsellers or Grisham or Clancy novels. They are in abundance elsewhere. Normals is for the serious reader, though that is not to say that Normals doesn't carry humor or quirky underground zines. It does. It also sells used CDs and records. Across the street is "Allen's Used Bookstore." This is also a quality store. On 25<sup>th</sup> Street all that is left of the Book Block is "Kelmescott's Books." It is the Collector's Store. Anyone looking for First Editions should stop here first. Other stores? "Funk's Democratic Cafe," though no longer open during weekdays, has used books on the second floor. There are thrift stores around town with smatterings of books here and there. There are specialty book stores like "Mystery Loves Company" and "Black Planet Books" or "Sibanye." However, there are a lot less



Need an event covered? Call News Editor  
Dan Cuddy at (410) 882-4138  
or email [lite@toadmail.com](mailto:lite@toadmail.com).

than a couple of years ago. The megastores are welcome and provide many hours of browsing, but the used bookstores and the independent new book stores carried titles unavailable at the mass market chains. Hopefully, there will always be some little entrepreneur who will rent a store front and invite customers in to browse. The internet is fine, but there is nothing like the feel of a book in one's hands.

DAN CUDDY

### Announcements: "Lite" Moves

●In early December the Lite web site (<http://litecircle.dragonfire.net>) will move to a new home in cyberspace due to the fact that our internet provider for the last several years, Dreamhaven/Dragonfire Internet Services, recently announced its closing. Lite wishes them luck and extends our thanks for the wonderful service and support we have received. We regret the short notice, but received the news shortly before this issue of the paper went to press.

Lite has found a new home at ToadNet Inc., an internet service provider based in Severna Park, MD. The new URL will be: [www.toad.net/~pkinlock/lite](http://www.toad.net/~pkinlock/lite). Our email address remains the same: [lite@toadmail.com](mailto:lite@toadmail.com).

ToadNet offers a variety of services including high-speed DSL and dialup modem access. For more info, visit their web site at [www.toad.net](http://www.toad.net) or call (410) 544-6193.



Staff Photo

●Speaking of moving, Lite extends a fond farewell to staff member Colette Fozard, who is leaving for Massachusetts. Her enthusiasm is contagious and her help has been invaluable. Colette, it's been fun, we appreciate all your hard work, and wish you happiness and prosperity in New England! And we thank you in advance for the crash space on our next "leaf peeping" expedition.

●Help Lite help the community. Lite is sponsoring a winter food drive. Nonperishable food items may be donated at Lite-sponsored events, such as Lite Verse at Bibelot. The next reading will be Friday, December 15, 8:00 p.m. at Bibelot-Timonium. Featured reader is Barbara DeCesare. The January reading will be Friday, January 19, 8:00 p.m. at Bibelot-Woodholme. Program TBA. Check our January calendar on the Lite web site for details (<http://www.toad.net/~pkinlock/lite>).

PATTI KINLOCK

### NOTICE

Lite's New Web Address is:  
<http://www.toad.net/~pkinlock/lite>

Our email address remains the same:  
[lite@toadmail.com](mailto:lite@toadmail.com)

*Calendar, cont. from p. 3*  
*Baltimore Review* publication reading.

Monday, January 15

**8:00 p.m.** Downstairs at XandO. SLAMicide! Cover \$5. Renea Moss/Miami. For more info, call (410) 889-7076 or email [GalAengus@aol.com](mailto:GalAengus@aol.com). (Open mic & slam signups 7:30 p.m.)

Friday, January 19

**8:00 p.m.** Bibelot-Woodholme. An Evening of Lite Verse. Program TBA. Open reading follows. For more info, email [lite@toadmail.com](mailto:lite@toadmail.com). Bring a donation of a non-perishable food item for Lite's winter food drive.

Monday, January 22

**8:00 p.m.** Downstairs at XandO. SLAMicide! Cover \$5. Morris Stegosaurus/NYC. For more info, call (410) 889-7076 or email [GalAengus@aol.com](mailto:GalAengus@aol.com). (Open mic & slam signups 7:30 p.m.)

### To Have Your Event Listed

please send information to:  
Dan Cuddy, Calendar Editor  
41 Odeon Ct.  
Baltimore, MD 21234  
Tel. (410) 882-4138

*Information received after the 15th of the preceding month may not be printed. We reserve the right to edit all material to fit space requirements. Note: Lite: Baltimore's Literary Newspaper is published bi-monthly. A literary supplement is published in the off-months. Events may also be emailed to: [lite@toadmail.com](mailto:lite@toadmail.com).*

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The Lite Circle, Inc. is a non-profit literary organization based in Baltimore. We rely on individual contributions to continue our literary activities, including Lite Circle Books (a small-press publishing house), our various poetry reading series, and the publication you are reading right now. If you care about the literary arts in Central Maryland, join us. All you have to do is fill out the form below and send it to The Lite Circle, Inc., P.O. Box 26162, Baltimore, MD 21210.

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# L I T E B Y T E S

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

● **Robert Cooperman**, formerly an assistant editor of the *Maryland Poetry Review*, has a new book of poetry out, *In the Colorado Gold Fever Mountains*, published by Western Reflections Publishing Company. The book is \$16.95, illustrated, and contains 222 pages.

Walt McDonald, the Director of Creative Writing at Texas Tech University writes: "These are driving, sensuous poems, not at all talky or merely historical or cerebral; they give the feel of a region we could locate on a map, a rich Spoon River anthology of the mountain West, told with all the splendid aspects of the craft."

Cooperman shares an intimate view into the thoughts and lives of the people who toiled, loved and died in the early mining camps of Colorado. Cooperman gives the reader an experience of the old mountain West through the voices of the people who lived it. The book is really three books in one: *In the Gold Fever Mountains*, *A Coffin and a Carved Stone*, and *The Badman and the Lady*. Western Reflections Press can be contacted at 1-800-993-4490 or email: [wetrel@ouraycolorado.net](mailto:wetrel@ouraycolorado.net).

● Quintessential American artist Robert Rauschenberg is the subject of the first focus exhibition in the **Baltimore Museum of Art's** West Wing for Contemporary Art since the galleries opened in 1994. On display in a single gallery, this exhibition focuses on Rauschenberg's most innovative contribution to contemporary art, his Combines.

In the 1950s, Rauschenberg began experimenting with assemblages that broke down barriers between painting and sculpture by incorporating everyday objects such as Coca-Cola bottles, clothing, newspaper clippings, taxidermied animals, and photographs in his work. He invented the term "Combine" to describe this new art form.

Surveying Rauschenberg's work with the medium over four decades, this exhibition features masterpieces from the 1950s thru 1980s including *Canyon*, 1959 and *Rose Condor*, 1977. With these combines, the now-74-year-old Rauschenberg bridges the gap between the rarified realm of art and the more prosaic realm of the every day.

The exhibit runs from Dec. 6, 2000 through May 20, 2001. (Note—On Thursday, Dec. 14 at 2:00 p.m. the Curator of Contemporary Art Helen Molesworth will give a Gallery Talk, which will provide an in-depth look at this exhibition. For more info, call (410) 396-6314.

● On Sunday, Dec. 10 at 3:00 p.m. in Kraushaar Auditorium of Goucher College, 1021 Dulany Valley Rd., Towson, the Handel Choir will sing the unabridged version of Handel's *Messiah*. Tickets are \$25-\$18-\$14. For more info, call (410) 366-6544.

● Much is happening in the life of poet

and historian **Chris George**. His new book, *Terror on the Chesapeake: The War of 1812 on the Bay* (ISBN 1572490586) has been published by White Mane Publishing Company of Shippensburg, PA. Chris also recently returned to the U.S. from Paris where he attended a recording session for a CD for a new musical on Jack the Ripper for which he has written the book and lyrics. The recording sessions were arranged by Chris's collaborator, French composer Erik Sitbon, and featured French singers who have appeared in such musicals as *Les Miserables*, *Phantom of the Opera*, *Cats*, and *Martin Guerre* in France, Germany, and Britain. The part of Jack the Ripper is played by Pierre-Yves Duchesne, who is featured on the French cast recording of *Les Miserables* and who will be playing the lead role in *Jeekyll and Hyde* in Germany in the coming months. Chris says that there are no plans at present for a general release of the CD. The creative team's intent is to attract the interest of a major producer to mount the musical on stage, possibly in London. Chris and composer Erik Sitbon have been working on their musical for over a year. They "met" in September 1999 through Stephen Ryder, who runs the Internet site, "Casebook: Jack the Ripper." Although Chris lives in the U.S. and Erik in France, they began to correspond by e-mail in order to compose the songs that make up the musical. Chris's trip to Paris in October was the first time the two had met. Of the collaboration, Chris says some of the songs were written to specifications for music Erik already had in mind, while with others he devised the lyrics first and Erik composed music to go with the words.

Chris remarks, "I found I had an affinity for Erik's dramatic music and sensitive arrangements. The power of Erik's music allowed me free reign to imagine the times of Jack the Ripper and reconstruct the East End of 1888 and Jack's murder spree. It was a time of terror which has left a lasting impression on the world and which continues to resonate through history."

● On Nov. 19 at the Stoney Run Meeting House, adjacent to the Friends School campus, 11 Baltimore area poets read at the **3rd Annual Margaret Diorio Arts & Peace Poetry Reading**. Vonnie Crist, Dan Cuddy, Barbara Simon, Thomas Dorsett, Rosemary Klein, Michael Fallon, Wendy Stevens, Chester Wickwire, Dave Kriebel, Alan Barysh and Sam Schmidt read. Hugh Burgess, who was scheduled to read, had to leave early, and, unfortunately for those present, wasn't able to share his work. The reading presented a variety of styles and subject matter. For those wanting a glimpse into the Baltimore Literary scene this annual reading wouldn't be a bad place to start. The reading itself is a memorial to poet Margaret Diorio who graced the Baltimore area for years. She

wrote sturdy but delicate lyrics over the years that are still prized by those who have her books.

A book published after her death—*Margaret: Remembering A Life That Was Poetry*—is still available through Icarus Press. This book contains a section of her poetry plus tributes written by other poets about her, and biographical material that illuminates the soul of this remarkable woman. Call her husband, and partner in Icarus books, Dave Diorio, at (410) 821-7807 for a copy of the book. This book, \$11.95, is not so much a commercial venture, as everything in American society seems to be these days, but a labor of love. The reading itself is used to raise a few dollars for various peace related causes. This year it benefited HIPP, an AFSC Program to help reduce youth violence.

●**The Robert E. Parilla Performing Arts Center**, on the Rockville Campus of Montgomery College, 51 Mannakee St., continues its 2000-2001 Guest Artist Series with singer, songwriter, and pianist, **Joe Morra**. Morra returns for his 4<sup>th</sup> visit to the Performing Arts Center with a repertoire of original material from his CD, *Conversation With The Prophet*, some old favorites from his debut release, *My Pleasure*, and reinterpretations of American popular songs from the 1940's through the 1990's. When: Sunday, Dec. 3 at 7:30 p.m.. Tickets \$12 regular, \$10 Senior Citizens and Students. Reserved Seating. Box Office: (301) 279-5301.

●**The Black Writers' Guild of Maryland, Inc.** is a group dedicated to the promotion of writing and literacy. The Guild provides critique sessions for aspiring poets, novelists and historical writers. Publishers and established authors will also lead discussions on how to become published and on how to get an agent.

Meetings are held monthly on the first Saturday at 1 p.m. at 3023 Garrison Blvd. Baltimore, MD 21215 (except for July, August). The Guild provides a forum where published and non-published writers share their work, explore new ideas, and reach new heights of creativity through mutual support. The Guild also plans to provide tutoring services to youth in reading and writing in the Fall of 2001.

For more info, contact President Louis Diggs at (410) 747-6812/email [lsdiggs@bcpl.net](mailto:lsdiggs@bcpl.net) or Vice President Emma Graves at (410) 747-5898/email [sidem@starpower.net](mailto:sidem@starpower.net).

●Anyone especially interested in African American Literature should visit the **Sibanye Book Store**, 4031 West Rogers Ave., Baltimore, MD 21215. (410) 358-5806.

●**Mel Tansill**, a public relations practitioner, published poet and adjunct writing professor, will speak to a Howard County high school student writing alliance about "Writing's Influence on Life and Work" on Monday, Dec. 4, 7:30-9:30 p.m. at Barnes & Noble, Long Gate Shopping Center, 4300 Montgomery Rd., Ellicott City. The event is free and open to the public. Tansill will speak to scores of

Howard County high school students who meet monthly to discuss the field of writing, as well as to critique their own fiction and non-fiction.

Tansill is the public affairs director for Catonsville-based Erickson Retirement Communities' national senior housing network. His poetry has been published in local and regional literary publications. He has taught writing at the University of Baltimore and began his career as a writer for the *Baltimore News American*.

●There's still time to check out "**Obsession**," an exhibition presented by the Goucher Department of Art featuring artists Nivedita Deshpande, Danina Grunsten, Tracey Halvorsen, James Hersey, Tobin Hines, Calla Thompson, Piper Shepherd, and Allison Soll. Rosenberg Gallery, Goucher College, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. weekdays and some weekends. The exhibit runs through Dec. 20 and is free and open to the public. For more info, call (410) 337-6333. Goucher College is located at 1021 Dulaney Valley Rd. in Towson.

The "Obsession" exhibit examines how people view and understand obsessions as they pertain to everyday lives. From a clinical perspective, many people view obsessions as a negative part of one's personality. However, this exhibit shows that artistically, obsessions can be a source of creativity and expression in an artist's work. Additionally, Goucher has created a temporary web site with links to other sites that highlight artistic obsession and examine the nature of information gathering and dissemination as a global obsession (call for info).

●"**Lite Verse at Bibelot**" features local poet **Barbara DeCesare** at Bibelot-Timonium on Friday, Dec. 16, 8:00 p.m. Dave Kriebel hosts. Open reading follows.

●We receive a calendar of events for children for the 30 branches of Baltimore's **Enoch Pratt Free Library**. Here a few examples of events in December. Parents should contact their local library for a schedule of events.

**Hamilton Branch**, 5910 Harford Rd. (410) 396-6088.

—Winter Crafts. Wednesday, Dec. 13, 3:00 p.m. Ages 6 to 12.

**Herring Run Branch**, 3801 Erdman Ave. (410) 396-0096.

—Books On Video. Wednesdays Dec. 6 & 20. Ages 5 to 12.

—Toddler Storytime. Thursday, Dec. 14, 10:30 a.m. Ages 18 months to 24 months. Call to register.

—Holiday Stories, Poems & Videos. Monday, Dec. 18, 3:30 p.m. Ages 5 to 12. Call to register.

**Highlandtown Branch**, 3323 Eastern Ave. (410) 396-1580.

—Holiday Celebration. Wednesday, Dec. 20, 6 p.m. Ages 5 to 10. Stories, crafts & a treat.

●The Commercial Bookstores—**Bibelot, Borders, Barnes & Noble**—have programs every month for children. Parents, contact the store near you for the schedule.

## Lite

The Lite Circle, Inc.  
Guidelines for Writers

1. Founded in 1992, The Lite Circle is a non-profit literary organization devoted to the encouragement of emerging voices in the arts. *Lite: Baltimore's Literary Newspaper* is a bi-monthly publication featuring art, literature, and book reviews. Formerly a quarterly magazine, it is now a free tabloid publication carrying one story and several poems per issue. A literary supplement is published on the off-months. We seek to give emerging writers and artists the opportunity to reach a broad, literate audience, and to keep our readers informed of literary events in Central Maryland. *Lite: Baltimore's Literary Newspaper* is distributed in the Baltimore area and Central Maryland, with a press run of 10,000 copies. The Lite Circle also publishes book-length manuscripts in cooperation with authors under the imprints "Lite Circle Books" and "Sunrise Press." The "Guidelines for Writers" apply to all Lite Circle publications, and the term "Lite" as used here refers to all Lite Circle publications.

2. Lite holds one-time publication rights to all material accepted for publication. All other rights remain the property of the author. Terms of payment: For *Lite: Baltimore's Literary Newspaper*, 5 copies of an issue in which submission appears. For Lite Circle Books/Sunrise Press: 1 contributor's copy (unless other arrangements are made).

3. Electronic submissions to Lite are encouraged. Email submissions to: [lite@toadmail.com](mailto:lite@toadmail.com) (attachments OK; Microsoft Word or WordPerfect format preferred). Submissions may also be sent as ASCII text in the body of an email; special formatting such as italics or bold should be noted. We will also accept documents on disk (WordPerfect or Microsoft Word format preferred). Please include contact info/short bio. Hard copy submissions to Lite should be on plain 8-1/2" X 11" paper, double spaced, typewritten or computer printed, with no handwritten editing or other marks anywhere on the document. Notes concerning the copy may be made in legible handwriting on accompanying separate sheets. Copy must include the author's name, address and telephone number on the first or last page; for multiple simultaneous submissions, each work must be a separate document, each with the author's name, address and telephone. Please include short bio.

4. Word limits—Poetry: generally no more than 30 lines, but up to 50 lines may be accepted for poems in stanza, section, or any divided format; Fiction: 1,000 to 4,000 words (longer pieces may be used in serialized form); Humor: 300-1,000 words. Reviews: 300 words. Due to the enormous amount of material we receive, response time averages 6-12 months.

5. Lite reserves the right to do all editing appropriate to maintain grammar, stylistic consistency, and standard punctuation without advance notification to the author. We suggest that deliberate deviations from standard grammar and spelling be noted on a separate sheet to avoid editing problems. Lite will do everything possible to advise writers in advance of publication of any proposed changes which may affect the author's meaning or stylistic integrity; writers may withdraw their manuscripts from consideration should they conclude that proposed changes are unacceptable, provided notification is made within three days of notice of proposed changes.

6. Lite will not accept manuscripts which contain the following: sexually explicit language or graphically depicted sexual scenes; gratuitous expletives; pointless or graphic violence; material denigrating any race, nationality, gender, or religion. Authors accept all responsibility for factual errors contained in any submitted manuscript. By submitting to Lite, author agrees to the the editorial policies and conditions as stated in these guidelines.

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◆ Friday, Dec. 15, Bibelot Timonium  
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Open reading follows.

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## Lite Sightings: THEATRE REVIEWS

**The Philadelphia Story. Smith Theatre,  
Washington/Baltimore area. Sunday,  
November 5, 2000.**

This polite comedy of manners, in three acts, written in 1939 by the dramatist Philip Barry, was presented by the RepStage Company under the précised direction of New York director David Hilder.

The plot is focused on the romantic awakening of the Philadelphia divorced heiress Tracy Lord (Michelle Shupe). It has been assumed, although not confirmed, that the character was inspired by Hope Montgomery Scott, the Androssans' socialite who in her time was considered the mighty queen of Philadelphia Wasp's oligarchy.

Tracy, the inhibited and spoiled daughter of the privileged, is about to get married again and this time to a successful young snob, George Kittredge (Drew Kahl). Her ex-husband, C. K. Dexter Haven (Nigel Reed), who works for the the gossip tabloid, *Spy*, arrives at the Lord's mansion the day before the marriage takes place, determined to spoil the wedding plans because he's still in love with his ex-wife.

Tracy's brother, Sandy (Scott Fortier), arranges the injection of the writer Macaulay-Mike-Connors (David Via) and the photographer Liz Embrie (Pamela Sherman) to report the wedding ceremony, hoping to divert their attention from his father (Marty McDonough)'s romance with a Broadway dancer.

The haughty Tracy learns to achieve emotional security following a harmless interlude with Mike, the reporter assigned to cover her wedding. After rejecting the smug bridegroom, Tracy returns to her former husband, to the satisfaction of everyone in the family.

The lack of complicated episodes is offset by sophisticated innuendos such as the implicit moonlight nude swim in the pool, and also by witty dialogues which retain the play's cleverness.

Michelle Shupe as Tracy showed very bright acting and realistically depicted the willful and high-spirited socialite, with her ups and downs sometimes somewhat exaggerated, but also with a reminiscent aura of the sassy Katherine Hepburn in *High Society*; although lacking Grace Kelly's finesse in the same memorable role.

Emery Geiger-Snyder as the sister Dinah was witty with a naughty streak. Nigel Reed was very convincing and conspicuous. Also very commendable were the performances of Dan Via, Celeste Lawson as the mother; J.M. McDonough, Scott Fortier, and Jeff Baker as Uncle Willie. The set design by Tony Cisek was very impressive.

In this delicious comedy, Philip Barry reveals the struggle of social roles in accepting the world's human frailty.

MEAGHAN GREYSON

**The Secret Affairs of Mildred Wild. At  
the famous little theatre, The Vagabond,  
Baltimore, MD. November 12,  
2000.**

This boisterous absurd comedy, in two acts and written by Paul Zindel, was presented by The Vagabond Players and artfully directed by Ann Mainolfi, who also directed, at The Vagabond, the delightful *Scapin*.

The play is set in the tiny living quarters, behind a candy store, of an ancient and dilapidated building located in Greenwich Village, New York City. The candy store was operated by Roy and Mildred Wild. In that dwarfish room, the delusional Mildred escapes reality living bizarre and fantastic dreams which were conjured by all her movie watching and reading. By a lucky chance, Mildred happens to win one of the multiple sweepstakes that she continually entered; although, as usual, the prize is not what she expected and was promised. It was another clever caper launched by a promotional company. Mildred, painfully disappointed and in despair by being bluntly brought down to harsh reality, suddenly realizes that she is going homeless because she never took the appropriate steps to procure new dwellings, ignoring the warnings that the building was going to be demolished. Her husband, Roy, comes to her rescue and in a forgiving and loving gesture offers her lodging and spiritual help. All comes to an end in a very sweet and emotional reconciliation.

This outlandish comedy, which reveals influences of Edward Albee, required a skillful art in directing a bunch of "lunatic" characters and also in putting together a performance without falling into a state of chaos.

Celia Rocca, as Mildred Wild, was a magnificent portrait of a delusive woman who feels dejection in her distorted perception of life.

Joe Cimino (Roy Wild) was very convincing as the resigned husband who accepts his wife as she is without regrets, and only rebels when he is rejected by his crazy wife.

Good acting was also shown by Mary Knower (Helen Wild), Stan Morrow (Carole Chatham), and Elizabeth Boskey (Sister Cecilia). The choreography by Tom Wyatt was very creative and funny.

From Zindel's "writer's abyss," with extraordinary technique and courageous turmoil, emerges a subconscious vision of predicaments that surface and later clarify themselves into characters who, at the end, always answer and solve the dilemma.

MEAGHAN GREYSON

**Richard II. The Shakespeare Theatre,  
Washington D.C. Sunday, November  
19, 2000.**

This play was written entirely in verse by William Shakespeare around 1594 and published by 1597 with the essential events drawn from Holinshed's *Chronicles* and

Continued on page 11

## Lite Reading: BOOK REVIEWS

**The Wonder Horse: Poems by Chester  
Wickwire. Published by Chestnut Hill  
Press. \$10.00. 76 pages, paperback.**

Before discussing the poems in Chester Wickwire's new book, it should be pointed out that the cover design and layout are beautifully done by Chestnut Hill Press, as was his first book, *Longs Peak* (1998). The production values of a publisher are important. Though they don't guarantee the quality of an author's writing, they do say "this is a writer that we want you, reader, to take seriously."

Wickwire's poems are more narrative and epic than lyrical. In the long narrative "Generations," in which the poet traces his lineage, the pioneering spirit and the hard times of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century are portrayed. The writing is a terse, clipped narrative. Images abound but with economy. Here is a description of his paternal grandmother:

*listless short-bobbed brown hair a  
surprise  
accenting stark prairie-pinched face  
atop gaunt plains-warped frame size  
five foot two  
still a force reckoned with trying to  
civilize Inavale Nebraska*

The narrative in this poem, and in others, is not myopic or minimalistic. Society at large and history move in and out of the foreground. The poets' ancestors don't exist in a vacuum but exist in a world when the "Transcontinental railroad unites East and West." The liveliness of family stories co-exists with the march of facts. The narrative is descriptive. There are no superfluous images. One feels the prairie, the soil, the hard life of a farmer, or a railroad worker or the strength of a widow with her brood of children to feed. The poet's narrative gives the reader a vivid history to relive in the imagination.

"Generations" is the longest poem, 20 pages long, but it is not the only poem in the book. "Incidents on New Year's Eve," "The Wonder Horse," "Time Piece" and "Yale Divinity School" are just a few of the other titles. Some of the poems directly address Chester Wickwire's concern over social justice, such as "Inscriptions On A Wall" which recounts his experience of a night in jail for protesting against racial discrimination at the Gwynn Oak Amusement Park in Baltimore in 1963. Other poems address relations with members of his family. "Yale Divinity School" is as much about his relation with his mother as with his education. There are also occasional short poems like "Intentions" which are pure lyric.

DANCUDDY

Have a book review?  
Have a book you'd like reviewed?  
Want to suggest a book?  
Send it to: Wendy Stevens,  
Book Review Editor, The Lite Circle  
P.O. Box 26162  
Baltimore, MD 21210  
Or, you can send email to:  
[lite@toadmail.com](mailto:lite@toadmail.com)



Late December of 1899 in pioneer West Texas was raw—cold but not wet, so the New Year's Eve party would be held as planned. It would be the first big party the McLean family had ever held, because when they were at the ranch, so far out of town, such a thing was near impossible.

This is how it all came about.

John and Virginia McLean and four of their five children had moved into town from their ranch for the three coldest winter months. Ranching was slack during the winter, and John's foreman, black-eyed Guy Manning, would look after everything while the family was in town, although John would ride back to the ranch once or twice. The town had no more than a handful of houses in the main part of it; still, there was a general store with a post office in one corner, a blacksmith shop, a saloon, and a few other small buildings, including the new one-room schoolhouse, with six pupils waiting.

Yet just out beyond this fledgling oasis of civilization, through a gap in the hills, lay outlaw country.

"Ginia," John had said idly one day awhile back, "you know how people say that if an honest man were to go through that gap he'd never come back alive. You reckon that's just talk?"

Virginia raised her eyebrows at him. "Maybe, maybe not. Just don't you even think of being the one to rush to find out."

He grinned.

The family had moved into town that winter because John McLean was a licensed teacher as well as a rancher, one of the few in the county. And as a teacher he was needed for the new school and the six pupils waiting—not counting the four in-town McLean children. John and Virginia taught their own five children throughout the year, of course, as everyone knew, and not with regular school books, because they had none. They began with the classics, Whittier, Tennyson, Shakespeare, and the Bible, as well as history and math, and they learned them, too.

The McLean children were stairsteps: Ian, thirteen, and dignified; Emmy, eleven, lean and dark; Chad, eight, and Egan, six, both towheads and close as twins; and little Belle, four, who even now could recite parts of Oliver Wendell Holmes's "The Wonderful One-Hoss Shay."

In good years, when the town could afford to pay a teacher and find housing for him and his family, if he had one—because the state paid for only part of the teacher's salary—school would be held for a full three months. In less good years it would be either canceled entirely or cut short.

The house the town had found for the McLean family was on the edge of town, near a bluff overlooking a creek. It was smaller than their house at the ranch, but, for John and Virginia, that was nothing at all compared to the satisfaction, even excitement, of helping to start the town's first school. For thirty-four-year-old Virginia, it also meant luxurious time to socialize with other women. For the children the satisfaction, and excitement, lay in having other children to play with as well as the

# The Turn of the Century Party

by

M. V. Callcott

*Illustration by Diana Botteon*

various enticements of town, such as the general store and its penny candy. For all of them, it meant fewer chores.

In anticipation, John had sent for a hand-held school bell, a loud one that he could ring to call in the pupils at start of day and after lunchtime.

"Listen to this, Ginia. Could never say you didn't hear it, could you," he grinned, giving it a vigorous swing.

Virginia clapped her hands over her ears. "John McLean, you stop that racket right now!"

He laughed but put his free hand on the bell and silenced it.

Also, since this had been a good year for the town, John had been able to send for copies of McGuffey's Reader. He had carefully checked over the new schoolhouse, which measured twelve by fourteen feet and was complete with long benches, plank tables, nails for hanging up coats and hats, a heating stove, and a proper place for the teacher. There was good thick brush to the north that would be "the boys' area," or outhouse, and more to the south that would be "the girls' area."

Children who could be spared from home to attend the school, and who could manage the trips back and forth on foot or horseback, were considered immensely fortunate. Those who rode could even study on horseback. Some of the wealthier ranchers, back a bit from the frontier, imported governesses, but both the senior McLeans felt that such people often taught mainly frills.

Although all four of the younger McLean children loved their newly assigned house and the lifestyle that went with it, thirteen-year-old Ian, for some time now a responsible working hand as befitted his more advanced age, had elected to stay on the ranch and work with the rest of the cowboys, and John had left Ian's schoolwork assignments there with him.

That first week in town—when little brown-haired Emmy, at eleven, was the oldest child in residence—Virginia, five months pregnant with what would be her last child, sat at the supper table one evening after the children had all been excused, and gazed thoughtfully into space with her luminous hazel eyes, a bemused smile on her face.

"John," she said slowly, "why don't we

celebrate our having a new school like we ought to? And your being its first teacher and our being in town for a few months? Why don't we have ourselves a real party?"

John, blue-eyed, sandy-haired and mustached, considered his wife for a moment. He shook his head, but he too was smiling. "Ginia, you been thinking again, haven't you. You thinking of Christmas?"

"No, not Christmas. We always celebrate that. I thought maybe, this year, New Year's Eve."

John sighed and shook his head again. "New Year's Eve. And I bet I know what that means." He grinned. "Don't I?"

"Why not?" She grinned back.

And so they decided to have a very special party, a very special celebration for a very special New Year's: New Year's Eve, December 31st, 1899—the turn of the century.

They would shake the very earth before that night was done.

John first invited Guy Manning, his foreman and their friend of longstanding—and of course Ian—and maybe half a dozen of the other cowboys they knew best. He invited their neighboring ranchers and families, as well as the parents of the six schoolchildren and a few others in their tiny community.

All the women who were coming would bring food—fussed over for days—and plates, and Virginia too spent much of three days laboring over pecan pies, white and yellow cakes, venison, ham, and a wild turkey that John brought in at the last minute on Lady, his favorite saddle horse.

When dusk of the party day arrived, Virginia saw to it that all the four at-home children were dressed in their Sunday best, including shoes, as were she and John. John's black dress shoes shone like mirrors. Then Virginia called the youngest children—Chad, Egan, and little Belle.

"Here," she said, conspiratorially. "I have something for you." And she gave them each a few of the big wing and tail turkey feathers to put in their hair or tie on their heads so they could pretend they were Indians. Almost all the real Indians were on reservations by then, of course.

"Now skedaddle," she said, shooing them. "Outside with the bunch of you."

The older children, including Emmy, stayed inside to help the adults.

As party time drew near, John made eggnog for the midnight toast—a very special treat, although there was no liquor in it. Not there, not then, not for decent folks.

The first guests to arrive were all the cowboys, Ian among them, who rode in together, six or eight of them. Except for the sounds of their horses' hooves, they were unusually quiet. There was no shooting off of their six-shooters that festive night, perhaps because it was such a special occasion—one they knew they would never see the likes of again. But to Virginia it was eerie, even ominous, to hear nothing but silence and the steady beat of hooves.

But now as the cowboys approached, and in the clear night, the stars glowing huge and bright, Virginia could see every movement as they dismounted at the log fence across the front yard. Some tied their horses to the fence, but others, with ground-broke mounts, just tossed the reins over the horses' heads and let them fall to the ground.

Then the cowboys tromped up on the gallery, or porch, and hung their gunbelts on some nails, the guns sparkling in the starlight. They took off their spurs and hung them up, too, and their hats, for no polite cowboy thereabouts would go into a house for a social occasion with his gun and his spurs on, or his hat, especially if there were ladies present. Maybe twenty or thirty years earlier he would have kept his pistols or a rifle handy, just in case, Virginia mused, remembering tales she had heard of those days.

She had opened the door in welcome and stood there smiling while they finished their gentlemen's ceremony.

From beside her, John, tall and rangy, called out, "Come along in, boys! We need company."

Then the families began to arrive, most of them in creaking wagons so that the babies and small children, warmly covered, could sleep. John and some of the men took care of the horses and wagons, and Virginia greeted all those who came into the house. She gave a few more turkey feathers to the younger children, who ran around the yard like wild things themselves, excitement high even if they didn't know just why.

Virginia watched them for a minute. What a funny-looking bunch they all were with those long feathers dangling over their faces and shoulders. They ran around, arms outstretched, yelling and trying to touch one another but not to be touched in return. It was like the Plains Indians' counting coup, when warriors in battle won honors if they could touch the enemy without being touched, Virginia thought briefly, remembering, and how in heaven's name had that ever become a child's game?

She had an abrupt memory of the time on the ranch a dozen or so years before when, terrified, on a rise behind the house she'd glimpsed a lone, silent Indian on a paint pony, rifle in hand, bow and quiver of arrows over his shoulder. For a moment their eyes had met, then, still silent, he had

*Turn, continued on p. 10*

Turn, cont. from p. 9

vanished. But the memory had haunted her.

Meanwhile, the house was humming with chatter and laughter, and Virginia returned to her guests. Food was piled high everywhere, helter skelter, in the small kitchen annex that had been built on to keep cooking heat more isolated during the long, hot months. Some of the men went outside and shot off firecrackers; they made little white explosions that were gone almost before they began.

Then Luke Harrison, the red-headed fiddler, arrived, carrying his fiddle case. He started his music, and everyone hurried into the house. Almost any community could find a fiddler somewhere, and John had known Luke Harrison, the widowed blacksmith, for years.

As Luke played, John stood beside him and called out the dances. Emmy and the younger children liked the play dances, such as "Skip to My Lou" and "Shoot the Buffalo." The adults loved them all. Some of the men, without enough women to go around, danced and stomped by themselves, giving forth their Texas yips and yells. Even dignified Ian, growing so tall now, after just watching for awhile joined in, grinning.

The room was filled to overflowing. All the cowboys seemed to have shined their boots for the occasion, and the women's wide skirts flew out wild when they were swung around. When Emmy and the young girls danced, the big, mustachioed cowboys lifted them clear off the floor when they swung them. Sometimes, too, folks sang when they knew the words to the music and had enough breath left over from dancing.

The floor shook from all their fancy footwork.

Virginia was wearing her good blue basque dress with its tight top and full skirt; it still fitted not too snugly, although with a brand new baby starting up in there it was a little tight. Her dark hair was pulled back in a large twist. At thirty-four, her skin, although taut, was beginning to be cross-hatched with fine lines from the dry heat, but John still told her she was a handsome woman with the most beautiful eyes in the world.

"You're so pretty, Ginia," he often murmured.

John was forty-five now, but still, Virginia thought, a very fine-looking man indeed.

Then Guy Manning asked her to dance, and, smiling, she held out her hand.

At about the time that John's voice was, finally, giving out and the dancers were breathing hard, Virginia glanced over at her husband, stepped out of the dance line, perspiration beaded on her forehead, and clapped her hands. Luke stopped playing and wiped his arm across his sweating brow.

"All right now, y'all!" Virginia announced. "Time for the men to step outside so we women can get the table ready."

The men all cooperated with gusto, with only a few more rebel yells; by this time they were hot and hunger was setting in.

They stomped their way outside to cool off, while inside Virginia and the other women shoved the long board table into place, covered it with a white cloth, and loaded it with the feast of food from the kitchen. Then, as the cold was surely beginning to chill the men's bones, Virginia went to the door and leaned out.

"Grub's on!" she called. "Come on back in."

The table was covered with food hot and cold, platters jammed close together. Just the sight of it all started the mouth watering, the juices flowing, and the smells of venison and biscuits, black-eyed peas and kidney beans, turkey and greens, pecan pies and generously frosted cakes, and strong coffee, mingled and teased the senses. The coffee was in Virginia's two big pots on the back of the cast-iron stove and milk was in pitchers on a little side-table. The women served the younger children, and the men's plates, especially, were loaded.

One of the older women leaned, eyes twinkling, toward Virginia. "Looky there, honey, aren't those plates just heaped like wagons with sideboards?"

Finally Luke Harrison began playing again and all the others alternately ate and danced until, at a signal from John, Luke struck a loud chord, then stopped fiddling. The people grew still, and John rose, stood tall and straight, and held his watch with its gold chain up high enough for everyone to see.

"Ten more minutes!" he announced in his fine strong voice.

Once again the whooping and stomping started and Luke fiddled with all his might.

John stood, watching his friends and smiling, then glancing at his watch. Then his hand went up and again all sound stilled.

"Ladies, gentlemen, and children, five more minutes until December touches January and the century *changes!*"

This time the noise stayed down, and the dancing slowed. There was a difference in the room, a quiet as though perhaps the end of the world were really coming, just as some of the preachers had said it would.

Then John's hand went up for the last time, and Virginia moved over and stood beside him. "Ladies, gentlemen, and children," John said slowly, eyes fixed on the second hand of his watch, then suddenly loud and clear, "*Nineteen hundred is here!*"

The room went wild. Once again Luke Harrison fiddled with all his might, and people sang, danced, yipped, and held up glasses of eggnog in toasts to the new century.

Then Virginia saw John and the cowboys gather at the door and whisper to one another, and as she smiled at what was coming, they all turned and quietly went outside. Ian materialized from somewhere and followed them out. First just a few other people noticed, then everyone began to follow them out of the house, some of the women grabbing their shawls.

Virginia followed them, her feelings mixed. One century, with all she'd ever known and loved was gone, and a blank slate, with nothing upon it, lay ahead.

They all walked down to the road, past the fence and toward the nearby creek. Then they stopped on the bluff while John, the cowboys, the other men, and Ian, lean as his father, started walking quickly, down the dirt trail that led to the creek bottom. Those on the bluff, mostly women and children, watched as the men moved out of the starlight and into the shadows.

Virginia stood very still on the bluff, caught up in her mixed feelings. Then Emmy came over to her and leaned against her. Chad and Egan were with a group of other young boys. Independent little Belle had somehow managed to fall asleep in her own bed, even with all the party racket. Virginia had earlier found her there, kissed her, and covered her.

By now all the men had disappeared into the night. Then suddenly, from out of the blackness down by the creek, a fiery flash, bright as lightning, shot into the sky. It lit up everything, even the place on the bluff where the watchers stood, and right along with it came a deafening roar, loud as the loudest crash of thunder. It shook the ground like an earthquake.

Two of the babies in the wagons woke up and cried. The small children and the animals were terrified. Some of the horses whinnied and pulled back from the fence or wherever they were tethered, although none of them bolted. The hens roosting in the tree beside the howse squawked and cackled. One rooster began to crow and the hoot owl that lived nearby began to hoot.

But Virginia was grinning, and all the rest of the adults were cheering and laughing and carrying on.

Soon after that the men straggled back up from the creek. They were shadowy at first, then clearer as they moved into the starlight again. They might have been coming back from some strange other world. They were running, or trying to, on that sandy, gravelly path, whooping and yelling. One was on horseback, although Virginia hadn't seen him going down. She wondered how the horse was managing to keep its footing. Ian followed. John walked in the back and seemed lost in thought.

"Mama," Emmy whispered urgently, "what happened?"

But just then John drew close to them and everyone stopped talking and, expectantly, watched him, their host. He stood right in front of Virginia and Emmy, Ian close behind him, and Chad and Egan suddenly crowding in around them.

"The new century has come," he said. "Now it's nineteen hundred instead of eighteen hundred and something. Let us hope that it will bring a strong and happy hundred years."

He and Virginia gazed at one another for a long moment, then John turned to mingle with the guests as they all strolled, laughing and chatting, back to the house.

As they walked, Chad and Egan subdued but listening, behind their mother, Virginia told Emmy what had happened. "This is a very important New Year's Emmy, you know that, so the men went down and exploded anvils as a real bang ending to our party."

Emmy frowned. "How can you explode anvils?"

"Well, you know they're made of heavy iron, and you know that one end of the smooth hammering surface has a hollow space in it for tools. This afternoon some of the men put one anvil from Luke's smithy down near the creek bottom and filled its tool space with gunpowder instead. Then they put in a length of fuse and put a second anvil, or maybe something else sort of like an anvil, upside down, on top. Then tonight they lit the fuse and ran, because when one of those anvils blows up, bits of red-hot metal fly out in all directions."

Emmy grinned and danced along beside her mother. "I want to see that again," she declared.

"Me too," Chad shouted.

"It's certainly *one* way to celebrate a real occasion," Virginia grinned back, "but one time an anvil blew a hole in Jess Barrett's barn and he wasn't very happy about that. He pretty much blew up, too. Another time one hit someone's home near town, so we don't really do it any more. But this was a very special occasion."

By now people were starting to collect their things and say goodbye. The cowboys put on their spurs, their gunbelts, and their hats, and this time began to sing their cowboy songs as they loped away, their horses' hooves loud on the cold, hard, West Texas road, voices and hoofbeats gradually growing faint in the distance.

The evening had begun in one century and ended in another, Virginia mused, once again caught up in her earlier mixed emotions as the celebration wound down. And yet—and yet—it was just another New Year's, after all. But whatever would folks in another hundred years think about whatever happened beginning with this coming year?

John's hand brushed against hers and briefly held it as he headed over to help with the last wagon to go, and she felt better.

Maybe, she thought, just maybe it'll all turn out right. Maybe something good will end up being written on that blank slate that lies ahead. I just bet it will, she thought in a wave of optimism.

And as John looked over at her, he smiled.



*Theatre, cont. from p. 8*

from Stowe's *Annals*. The plot in itself is very straightforward: the account of the abdication and murder of Richard II and the narrative of the hypocrite and ambitious yet reluctant usurper, Henry Bolingbroke, crowned Henry IV.

The play's interest centers on two connected things: the personal contrast between the falling and rising kings and their political actions, as well as the generational conflict. Richard's misgovernment invited and almost justified the forced and illegal seizure of the throne by Bolingbroke. There could not be a finer contrast between those two figures: the formidable king of deeds and the romantic king of hectic feelings, dreams and fancies. Shakespeare enhances historical facts with his psychological study of these two different temperaments: the emotional characteristics and behavior of Richard and Bolingbroke, which in fact are the creation of his genius and not exactly pure history.

As the conflict between the two men develops, Shakespeare heightens dramatic interest by constantly uncovering new and unanticipated sides to their personalities. Richard is whimsical and regards his realm not as a regal responsibility but as an amusement. His court comprises favorites and flatterers rather than wise advisers. He loves the ceremonies, the adulations, the regal privileges and the prerogatives, though he has no talent for the practical and effective business of ruling. Worse than his neglect of duty are his abuses of power, such as the collecting of unlimited taxes from the common people as well as the capricious seizing of Bolingbroke's land, title, and inheritance to pay for a war with Ireland—consequences of the clumsily-spoiled mediation in the feud between Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, and Bolingbroke, Duke of Hereford.

Richard is the embodiment of a bad king but he is still the king, therefore anointed by God. Bolingbroke returns from exile and ignites a revolt steered by most of Richard's supporters. Richard, whose deposition led the way to the dispute succession and the conflicts of half a century later, surrenders to the Earl of Northumberland, renouncing his throne and relinquishing his crown. Later he is imprisoned in Pontefract Castle and murdered, an act that was prompted by a frivolous comment of the new king, Henry IV. The slaying divided the succession into two dynastic strains, Lancaster and York, primary contenders for the crown in the War of the Roses.

The action was set in the England of the 1300s and this chronological transference was the effort of Gerald Freeman, whose expert direction brought out with keen efficiency the essential characteristics of the play as well as the excellence of the performers.

Wallace Acton was Richard II, son of Edward the Black Prince, talking in elaborated similes to interpret rather than deciding a situation, as well as using metaphors like a natural quality of the king's mind and temperament. Acton superbly portrayed a

king that is not only king by birth but by the dignity of his behavior and stature. Deeply searching into the monarch's soul, Acton seemed to be compenetrated with his role specifically when he showed no authority of will and power of both mind and hand; when breaking impetuously into sudden acts; when reflecting about watching himself slump to his downfall and becoming the spectator of his own ruin; and finally, in his philosophical and unique soliloquy upon the death of kings. He magnificently evinced Richard's propensity to verbalism by use of extravagant images and also in his keen sense of theatrical effect, acting his own part with all the tragic compulsion to suffer everything that the regal role demanded of him. Acton emphasized Richard's self-indulgence, his superficial sensitiveness, and the ineptness in confronting strenuous actions.

Andrew Long as Bolingbroke conducted a passive role with dignity, although lacking in the machiavellian features and the energy that a usurper of the throne should have shown, specifically when "this vile politician" in spite of his craft or because of it was a far more competent ruler than Richard, the legitimate king he replaced.

Freedman, the director, heightens the characteristics of the play: the question of the moral right to kill the bad king ending with Bolingbroke's command of a pilgrimage of penance to the Holy Land; the prophesy of the dying John of Gaunt; and the famous abdication scene with the climatic attitude toward kingship and its profound interpretation of the "divine rights of kings" as well as the "people's right to a good and just king." In this scene, for the Elizabethans who, then, still believed in magic, the golden crown possessed a high symbolic value; hence, important dramatic relevance.

Very commendable were the acting of Ted van Griethuysen as John of Gaunt, and David Sabin as the Duke of York.

This is the story of a well-meaning king too weak to rule, lacking justice and regard for the nation's welfare, but whose death fulfilled a prophesy of unleashing a bloody civil war two generations later as well as anticipating the social and political disorders of the future.

MEAGHAN GREYSON

Help Lite help the needy.

Feel good this Millennium.

Bring a donation of a non-perishable food item to the December and January Lite Verse at Bibelot readings. We won't promise that it will get you in for free, as the readings are already free, but it will make you feel good, and help someone less fortunate this holiday season.

Friday, December 15, 8:00 p.m.

Bibelot-Timonium  
Barbara DeCesare

Friday, January 19, 8:00 p.m.

Bibelot-Woodholme  
Program TBA

## Names in Lite

•**Ron Arnold** (*Bluebirds*) writes from Owings Mills, MD.

•**M.V. Callcott** (*The Turn-of-the-Century Party*) is a New Yorker now living in Southern California. She spent several years in Texas and many summers in Vermont, during one of which she attended Bread Loaf Writers' Conference as a contributor. She is a freelance editor and has also done considerable writing for hire as a rewriter, or as a researcher and writer. Under her own name she has published poems, short stories, articles, and other short items. Ms. Callcott has worked on two (finished) novels with the UCLA Writers' Program and on her own has embarked on another. Her work can be seen in *Orange Willow Review*.

•**D. M. Eason** is a Baltimore poet. Her work can be seen in the anthology *Lower than the Angels* (Lite Circle Books), *Fodderwing*, and numerous other publications.

•**Meaghan Greyson** (*Lite Sightings*) was born in New York and raised since almost a baby in Switzerland, London, and central Europe until 1959 when she permanently returned to America. She received a doctoral degree at the University of Georgia. For years she worked as a consultant but on the side wrote and still writes for newspapers in New York, Los Angeles, London and Sydney and also for the well-known internet magazine, *Theatre World*.

She now lives in Columbia, MD and continues to write theatrical reviews.

•**Paul Hamoy** (*Night Song: 3 O'Clock*) writes from Baltimore, MD.

•**Stephanie Hiteshe** (*Awake*) is a 21-year-old poet living in Columbia. She has been published in *A Moment to Reflect* in 1997 and is currently preparing a manuscript in hopes of eventual publication. She plans to study writing in college.

•**Karl Miller** (*Jessica Fitzpatrick*) graduated from the University of Florida in 1985 and currently works in insurance in Ft. Lauderdale. He has been published in a variety of literary journals over the last ten years.

•**Frank Vogel** (*Loss*) has been chasing an impossible dream for most of his life: to become a proverbial "Renaissance Man" in the 20th century. Completion of his thesis for a master's in musicology was interrupted by his enlistment in the U.S. Air Force. Upon realizing that Frank was, at best, a dangerous pilot, the Air Force ordered him to the Air Force Institute of Technology, where he obtained a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering and an MSEE with a major in solid state physics. After decorated service in Vietnam, he was an assistant professor of aerospace studies at Catholic University, and completed most of the course work toward a Ph.D. in English. His poetry has appeared in *Hellas*, *LIGHT*, and elsewhere, and has won recognition in several national contests, including the annual Writer's Digest competition.

## Announcing the MAN & MACHINE POETRY CONTEST

- First prize: \$50 2nd prize: \$30 3rd prize: \$20.
- Winners will receive a convention membership and be invited to read their winning entries at Balticon 35 (May 2001—see Balticon ad for details, p. 7). Winning entries will be published in the *BSFAN* (Balticon program book) and in *Lite: Baltimore's Literary Newspaper*.
- Limit: 3 poems/person, 32 lines each.
- No entry fee.
- Deadline: Mailed entries must be **postmarked** and email entries must be **received** by March 15, 2001.
- First, second, and third place winners announced
- Please include your name, address, telephone number/email address and a brief bio with your entry.
- Entries may be mailed w/SASE to "Man & Machine Poetry Contest," The Lite Circle, P.O. Box 26162, Baltimore MD 21210 or BSFS, PO Box 686, Baltimore, MD 21203-2737; or emailed to: [lite@toadmail.com](mailto:lite@toadmail.com).

### Lite

The Lite Circle, Inc.

Lite: Baltimore's Literary Newspaper

Lite Circle Books

P.O. Box 26162

Baltimore, Maryland 21210

Web: <http://www.toad.net/~pkinlock/lite>

Email: [lite@toadmail.com](mailto:lite@toadmail.com)

### Baltimore Science Fiction Society



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Baltimore, MD 21203-0686

(410) JOE-BSFS (563-2737)

<http://www.bsfs.org>

# Society's Page

## Issue 5

Brought to you by The Lite Circle, Inc.  
under the auspices of *Maryland Poetry Review*  
and Maryland State Poetry and Literary Society



### President's Comments

The staff of *Maryland Poetry Review* and of MSP&LS have recently participated in readings in Columbia (sponsored by the Maryland Center for the Book), at the Stoney Run Meeting House (the Arts and Peace Reading in Honor of Margaret Diorio), in Fells Point (a WordHouse reading at Minás Gallery), at the Universalist Unitarian Church in Towson, and at the Marshy Point Nature Center in Middle River. We also originated and designed, together with UMBC, the Millennium Reading Series at the Albin O. Kuhn Library, which provided a wonderful seventh-floor venue with an expansive overview of the UMBC campus. Articles in the student paper *The Retriever* confirm our opinion that these readings (and the workshops conducted by Rosemary Klein and others) were exceptionally well received. The featured poets were Gary Blankenburg, Hiram Larew, Rebecca Jones, Linda Joy Burke, Nefertiti Allen, Kathy Cottle, Matt Hohner, Richard Krohn, Melvin Brown, Reginald Harris, and Rachel Kubie.

At the helm of this reading series was Barbara Simon, managing editor of *MPR* and vice president of the Society. It's hard to imagine what we would have done without her in recent months. Her efforts would credit Super Woman. As managing editor she collects and tracks all the manuscripts we receive, while serving as our first reader. In short, she reads everything we receive, and that's a lot! Her various editorial talents have played a leading role in the publication of three chapbooks, George Bristol's *Borders and Barriers*, Bertha Rogers' *House of Corners*, and Elisabeth Stevens', *Household Words*. Incidentally, her essay "The Art—Moving into Loss" appears in Stevens' book. Another contribution to that book was the organization of the publication party at the Lillian Holt Center for the Arts in Parkville, MD.

Besides the UMBC series, Ms Simon organized the readings at the coffee bar at the Baltimore Book Festival. Among the readers were Bertha Rogers, from the Catskills and for whom the occasion was a publication party, and Mario Susko, the leading modern Croatian poet. Barbara convinced him to come down from New York City, where he now lives.

Somehow also, when not generating flyers for our events and working up information for our web site, Barbara manages to work teaching into her schedule. She teaches writing at UMBC, takes on various stints as a poet-in-the-schools, and works with the BrightARTS program in Baltimore City to publish children's poetry on the web.

We could use a half dozen volunteer workers like Barbara. We may not find many people with her level of commitment but we are about to take a hard look at our membership (partly by putting our information into a computer database), and it would be encouraging to find a few more people with a will to help us with such tasks as organizing and monitoring events, creating publicity, and sending out mailings. If you would like to sign on as a volunteer, please call me at 410-561-1878 or try my email, [hburgess@hotmail.com](mailto:hburgess@hotmail.com).

Hugh Burgess  
President, MSP&LS

### Millennial Series At UMBC A Success!

December 6 at 7 PM will be the last of the poetry readings sponsored by Maryland State Poetry & Literary Society at University of Maryland Baltimore County through the support of a grant from Maryland 2000 and *The Baltimore Sun*. This Wednesday-night event features Melvin Brown, Reginald Harris, and Rachel Kubie. All attending poets should bring their own work and brave the open reading that follows the three featured poets.

Michelle Jabes, reporter for UMBC's *Retriever*, noted that the goal of this series "is to make stronger the affiliation between the [UMBC] creative writing department and *Maryland Poetry Review*," the literary journal which has been produced for the past fifteen years under the auspices of Maryland State Poetry & Literary Society and whose

founding editor Michael Fallon is "UMBC's own creative poetry guru." Barbara Simon, active UMBC adjunct faculty member and managing editor of the *Review*, wrote and submitted the grant as well as set up and publicized the readings. Simon was joined in hosting the readings by Rosemary Klein, former member of the UMBC English Advisory Board and founding and current editor of the *Review*.

The first readings featured Gary Blankenburg, Rebecca "Mousey" Jones, and Hiram Larew. Jabes described the event thus, "Nestled in a sun-speckled alcove high above the campus, the three poets read their works to a small but attentive crowd." Of Blankenburg, also a founding *Review* editor, Jabes wrote that his "poetry startled us all with its satiric, dark humor and its hip, refreshing honesty." Freelance writer Jones' poetry Jabes found "hopeful and innocent, occasionally tinged with yearning for younger, sweeter days." Larew "ended the reading with a dynamic and conversational presentation of his work."

Linda Joy Burke, Katherine Cottle, and Nefertiti Allen formed the talented trio at the second reading held the evening of October 19. Jabes enthused that "Cottle's work wowed the audience with its stunning originality and vivid imagery." Then "with no papers in her hand, Allen sang African phrases and moved with the rhythm of her work, immediately drawing the audience into her world." For the finale "accompanied by a gigantic basket full of various percussion instruments, the self-named 'Bag Lady Diva' Linda Joy Burke softly took the stage, fighting a bad cold. Bravely she began her presentation, citing the deep importance of music in her writing life, which immediately explained the many drums and rattles she brought with her. Everyone in the audience then received something to play, wooden sticks, rain sticks, gourd shakers, even happy-face drum spinners." At the reading's end, several students expressed how glad they were that UMBC was sponsoring poetry readings, a sentiment echoed by Jabes who ended her *Retriever* article with "I advise everyone, poetry connoisseurs or not, to come and experience the music of poetry available to us here at UMBC."

Then on Saturday afternoon November 11 for two hours an enthusiastic audience listened to Matt Hohner and Richard Krohn read from and discuss their work and writing habits. Then the poets and audience formed two groups, and under Hohner's direction for each person to write a line of imaginative, interesting group of words, fold the line under, and pass the paper to the next person, two "group" works were written. Hohner gave the groups the first line "The ink is still bleeding," and Krohn's group, which included UMBC students Philip DePalo, Henry Chen and Angela Solly, produced the following poem:

The ink is still bleeding  
on the smooth cellophane lake.  
Breaking clouds stretch towards the ground.  
Half-melted buildings blend with the sky.  
Man-made pointers rock with the wind  
shaking in its poured foundations  
trembling with the nonsense of revelation.  
Imagery withholding, a spectral visage fades within.  
Chaos pours and encompasses everything.  
Birds dart around in the sunlight.

### The Treasure Trove That Is Minas'

by Rosemary Klein

One of the great pleasures of the holidays is shopping at Minas at 733 S. Ann Street (just down the block from John Stevens in Fells Point. Minas Konsolas, proprietor, is one of the area's most passionate, stalwart supporters of local artists and writers. For years, poetry and fiction readings and workshops and art shows have been held in his colorful, eclectic shop, which is open from 11 AM to 8 PM Wednesdays through Sundays. Currently in the Minas Gallery through January, Marguerite Moscati's intricate icons and shrines, expressing the delicate duality between pleasure and pain are on display, and everyone is invited to bring his or her holiday poems and to join the Maryland State Poetry & Literary Society and what promises to be a lively audience on December 10 at 4 PM for literary and literal refreshments.

This year I began to cross items off my holiday list the night before Thanksgiving. The shop buzzed with activity as, between customers, Minas and his wife Peggy replaced summer vintage with winter vintage clothing. In no time flat, I had found several "perfect" gifts: a lovely pink glass hand blown flower, a hand-carved wooden basket (which I plan to pack high with oranges before wrapping), a porcelain lighthouse, a papermache star painted in rich blues and golds from India, a watercolor landscape, and, for myself, a pair of vintage boots.

Choosing was not an easy task. On a round wooden table under a sign proclaiming "Read Baltimore Writers" were stacks of books, some, such as Danuta E. Kusk-Kosicka's *Between Here And There*, Stacy Johnson Tuthill's *Pennyroyal and House Of Change*, and Vonnie Winslow Christ's *Essential Fables*, signed by the authors. Others of interest, though not signed, included Rosemarie "MiMi" Zannino's *In A Bed Of Stones*, Gary Blankenburg's *Heartland*, Blair Ewing's *Chainsaw Teddybear*, Elisabeth's Stevens' *Household Words* (published by MSP&LS), Richard Peabody's acclaimed *Mondo Barbie, Mondo Marilyn, Mondo James Dean, and a different beat: writings by women of the beat generation*, as well as the MSP&LS-nominated winner of an ArtScape Poetry Award Kathleen Cocoran's *Bloodroot*.

Just as in evidence was the work of Baltimore artists. Glass bottles painted in surrealistic shapes of swirling, vivid golds, blues, greens, yellows, reds and pearl by Monica Lin, also a Baltimore poet. Watercolor landscapes (matted and a steal at \$10) painted by Robert Lienhardt, a former MICA instructor. Energetic, visionary watercolors painted intensely with force and movement by Van Newcomb would cheer any wall. Vintage bead necklaces by Stephanie Louis. Spoon Pumpkin hats, featured in this year's City Paper's Christmas issue, and, of course, originals and reproductions of Minas' own art, delicate and fanciful drawings, especially his well received "angels" series in addition to his "must have" hand-painted wine glasses and vases.

While I perused the offerings, a young girl and her father entered, looking for a birthday gift. Caitlin, nine, enthusiastically examined wooden models of dinosaurs, planes, cars and a huge, plastic blow-up globe. "I think this place is really cool," she exclaimed to me. Asked what she liked best, she enthused "The paintings with the bark (Aboriginal spirit images created with different types of tree bark by the Indian tribes of Mexico) and the jewel boxes." Then, pulling a languid pair of brown velvet pants from a rack, she added "I do like the clothes, and I like how there are different choices of stuff, so people can choose!"

The vintage clothes are, indeed, compelling. Jeans, sweaters, cowboy boots. Scarves of gold mohair or Shetland wool. Couture suits and dresses. Leather or velvety faux animal jackets. Lace sweaters and dresses hung like jewels in the window. Two dressing rooms assure that the buyer won't go away less than happily.

Minas' special inventory and generosity have not gone unacknowledged around these parts. Tacked to walls between wrapping paper, ribbon, cards are the 1994 and 1997 awards the shop received for Baltimore Best Postcards from the City Paper, and a thank you letter signed by the set director and the set decorating assistant of *Runaway Bride*.

However, it was Caitlin's dad first time in the store. What drew him in? The moment, he decided, had arrived. "I've walked by about three hundred times and thought it was about time to stop in."

Just slightly off the beaten track, the shop has a myriad of gifts under ten dollars. And with every purchase, a customer may, compliments of Minas, choose a free book. Caitlin decided on Dickens' Christmas stories, and as she and her father happily departed with an armful of clothes as well as the birthday present, they cheerily called "We'll be back."

### The Past And The Future

by Rosemary Klein

This summer Hugh Burgess agreed to take on the position of president of The Maryland State Poetry & Literary Society while I assumed the position of executive director.

As the new president of the Society, Burgess is taking on projects pertaining to new programs, our membership plans, and our volunteer base. As you will note from his column appearing since the last issue in The Society Page, this work is already in progress.

Now retired, Burgess spent most of his teaching career at McDonogh School, where he served variously as Associate Headmaster, Dean of Faculty, and Head of the English Department. He counts among his most satisfying achievements the chairing of the committee that planned McDonogh's new theater. Burgess also served as a teacher and administrator at the Manlius Pebble Hill School in DeWitt, N.Y. and at the Collegiate School in New York City.

He still manages to keep busy, writing articles for the *McDonogh Magazine*, reading on the Radio Reading Network for the blind and handicapped, serving as president of the Members Council for the new Marshy Point Nature Center in Middle River, reading manuscripts for a local publisher, and indulging his interests in biking, kayaking, sailing, and writing poems.

His literary background includes two books on the history of McDonogh School, a volume of poems called *Dwell Within These Distances* published by New Poets Series, and a recent chapbook *Penny's Hill* published by Lite Circle Books. His periodical placements include the *Sunpaper*, *City Paper*, *Peninsula Review*, *English Journal*, *Christian Century*, *Maryland Poetry Review*, *Dancing Shadow Review*, *Function at the Junction*, *Puckerbush Review*, and pending publication in *Yankee*.

Of writing he says, "It's like having a treasured friend who travels a lot. I never know when he will turn up, but I'm always delighted and usually surprised when he does. He stirs me up, makes me do tricks, teaches me things, and then leaves, grinning. No matter what state he leaves me in—and that can be quite unpredictable—I'm glad he came. And usually just as glad he left."

A Marylander who renews his New England roots by returning to Maine each summer to sail his small boats, watch the sun rise, and play trumpet in the community band, Hugh currently lives in Timonium with his wife Anne. They have four sons, six grandchildren, and one step-granddaughter scattered among Maryland, Vermont, New York and Ontario. They travel a good deal to stay in touch.

And Steve Cunningham deserves a special thanks as this year closes out. Despite the arrival of his first child Lucas and a grueling schedule with his George Washington medical studies, Cunningham has overseen the Society's web site, keeping it in shape, has compiled materials for *The Society Page*, and has edited poems for the upcoming issue of *Maryland Poetry Review*. We cannot thank him enough.

### Poetry

#### Call It In The Air

I am the air surrounding the coin  
flipped and whirring quietly.  
I am neither heads nor tails,  
not even the edge of that magical wheel.  
And whatever goods or order  
result from the luck of the call  
I was just a silent witness:  
my breath only context for the fall.

*I once had a notion that I was an ocean  
and the clouds were merely my fish.  
Now I flee before rain and put names to my pain  
and the wind is my only wish.*

I love swaying palm and swirling snow  
and helix-shaped rivers of starlings  
sculling along over suburban intersections.  
Tasting inflections, my tongue tells me where to go.  
I will feed the flames and lungs  
for as long as I shall last.  
Will atmosphere hold until your sun sets?  
Ladies and gentlemen, place your bets.

—Blair Ewing

### One

Seen from the air, that particular quarry seemed to sparkle more than others. Developers had dug it out from the edge of the Everglades in preparation for a project which had fallen through and had left the area, at least for the time being, to remain the home of the more benign animals.

Informally dubbed "Chrome Lake" by the Broward County Sheriff's Office, it earned the name due to the great number of cars dumped into its depths. One report held that nearly a tenth of all the stolen autos in South Florida found their way to the bottom of the manmade lake, where they were now stacked haphazardly, one of top of the other, to a depth of ten cars in places, rusting and crumbling under the steep banks from which thieves had sent them on their way. The trick was to pin down the accelerator and jump out as the car began to roll, leaving the car to shoot off the side of the lake to its grave. Very James Dean.

Sure, it was criminal, but like so many other problems in a comatose America, it went on with barely any notice. People suffered inconvenience, insurance claims went up, body shops got their parts, consumers' premiums increased. Resources were limited and there were, of course, bigger fish to fry.

### Two

The call lasted barely five seconds.

Kevin Pierce sat at his cubicle in the offices of Northeastern Florida Claims Service, located on the seventh floor of a glass-and-steel corporate building overlooking the St. John's River.

"You handled a claim for a teacher a short time back, a stolen Miata." The voice was young and female. There was street noise in the background. A payphone.

Pierce thought for a second and remembered a stolen car had been reported two months earlier. A 1993 Mazda Miata. It had belonged to a young English professor at a small liberal arts college in Ft. Lauderdale. Northeastern Claims had paid off the claim on behalf of the insurance company that had written the policy.

"Right. Who am I speaking with?" Pierce asked.

The caller ignored his question. "You want to find that car? Go down to Broward in Chrome Lake. Trust me—you need to find that car."

"How do you..." Pierce began but the phone on the other end of the line went dead.

Pierce checked the computer for information on the case. He walked to the back of the office, retrieved the file from the closed claim section and reviewed it as he went back to his desk.

He opened the envelope in the file jacket and removed the tape that he had used to record his interview with the professor. He recalled Jonathan Packard as a calm, lean man in his early thirties who had dressed in typical academic fashion—tweed jacket, conservative tie, khaki pants, wire-rimmed glasses. Fastforwarding through the introductory background questions, Pierce went to the heart of the

# Jessica Fitzpatrick

by  
Karl Miller

Photo by Moira Lachen

questioning.

"When was the last time you saw the Miata?" his recorded voice asked.

"It was in the college parking lot, in my designated space," Packard responded.

"Did you leave the keys in the car?"

"No, of course not."

"Did you notice anyone suspicious?"

"Actually, there were a few kids around that clearly were not students, at least not any students I'd ever seen. I told the campus police about them."

"What were they like? I mean, why were they suspicious?"

"Their dress. They were rough-looking, and they all had the same type clothes."

"What type of clothes?"

"Military boots. Black jeans. Yellow bandanas. The police told me it was some type of gang thing."

"And these kids were near your car?"

"They were in the parking lot. We're not a big school so they were basically near all the cars."

"How did you happen to see them?"

"Through my office window. I noticed them but I didn't want to overreact. They weren't actually touching my car. They were just standing near it."

"Did anyone else report problems with their cars?"

"Sure. yes. Definitely. Bob Gonzalez, a colleague in the Classics Department, had his Volvo vandalized."

"And that was done at the same time?"

"Right. It was found at the same time as mine was discovered missing."

"Do you know why these kids, if they did it, would have singled you and Mr. Gonzalez out?"

"Absolutely no idea," the professor answered.

Pierce turned off the recorder. His memory awakened, he realized that he had interviewed Gonzalez at the time and gotten essentially the same story. The other professor had also seen the kids out by the parking lot. He did mention, off the record, that it was common knowledge that Packard was having an affair with one of the students, and that he was distraught since she had gone missing at the same time as the Miata.

Pierce had paid off the claim, but now, after getting the call, he thought a talk with his old friend Ron Torborg was warranted.

Torborg was a college buddy from the University of North Florida who had gone to work for the St. Augustine Beach Police after graduation. After going through some small talk, and promising to get together over the weekend for some three-on-three at the local courts, Pierce asked Torborg about the gang angle, which Pierce had initially thought was plausible. His friend checked the file and called back.

"I'd just let your stolen car sit at the bottom of the lake. The Brood, as they call themselves, are rough. Prostitution, heroin, and, ta-da, car thefts. Supposedly they use the stolen cars to hide drugs and weapons, kind of like buried treasure. Really inventive stuff like special compartments in the trunk, false bottoms on the chassis. They're

very close-knit. Once we thought we had a female member ready to give evidence but she vanished. They supposedly have ties to larger, nationwide outfits. Victims picked at random."

"So stealing a Miata sounds like something they'd do?"

"Sure."

"How about Jessica Fitzpatrick, Packard's alleged girlfriend? According to the other professor I talked with, she went missing about the same time as the car. Can you check on that?"

Torborg called back again shortly afterward. "I should charge you for all the research, chief."

"Hey, I'll let you on my side this weekend."

"Should I be saying thanks?" Torborg joked. "Okay, here's the story. The girl's parents filed a missing persons report a week after the car was stolen. She's still missing. They put out the usual appeal to the public. There were a few calls, all anonymous. One said the girl had called from somewhere out west saying she was okay but distraught at being dumped by a boyfriend. Then there was the rumor she was seen hanging out with some rough-looking characters. There was also a call saying Packard was involved with her."

"I assume all this was checked out?"

"Packard maintained that they were friends only. He was known as the kind of prof that hung out with the students after hours. Had a lot of parties at his home. A real popular guy. People had their suspicions about him and the girl but no one, not a one, ever actually saw them together. She did date a boy named Mike Ambrose, but it wasn't anything serious. He was a kind of scummy kid, and she was a quiet, shy girl who pretty much kept to herself. That was an odd pairing, but Ambrose was clean—at least at that time. You know, heading in the wrong direction, but not actually there yet.

"All right—thanks for checking."

"By the way, do you want to know what the Brood's signature is?"

"Do I want to hear this?"

"Two fingers off the left hand of their victim, and one off the right. Usually both middle fingers and one other on the left. And, of course, no one ever leaves the group. The ones that try—no left hand and just one finger left on the right."

"Nice. Thanks for sharing."

### Three

Small things started it.

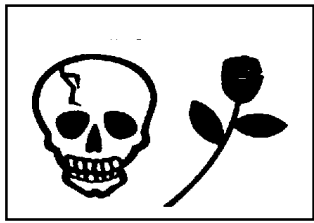
He noticed her in class, and she noticed him noticing. She was flattered and made an excuse to stop by his office. She didn't, at first, know he was married.

She was thin, with absolutely no body, and dressed more conservatively than the other students. Her face was quite pretty, and her questions revealed a strong intelligence which Packard particularly liked. She was shy but covered it with an appealing bravado that had vulnerability just beneath the surface. When she was in his office, he noted the body language, the tilted head, the face, the legs turned toward

*Jessica, continued on p. 14*



The Lite Circle Announces  
*Through A Glass Darkly*



New Mystery/Gothic Horror/Dark Fantasy anthology is **open for submissions until April 1, 2001** (or when full). Needed theme appropriate: stories (under 2,500 words), poems (under 50 lines), and essays (under 2,000 words). Check with editors for other non-fiction. Editors: Vonnie Winslow Crist, David Kriebel, P.E. Kinlock. Assistant Editor: W.H. Stevens. Anthology will be issued in a 6" x 9" trade edition

of about 190 perfect-bound pages and will debut at Balticon 2001. First time rights preferred. Pay: in copies at this time. To submit, please send your work along with a reading fee of \$3 per poem and \$5 per prose piece to: **Through a Glass Darkly**, % Lite Circle Books, P.O. Box 26162, Baltimore, MD 21210. All reading fees will be waived with an advance order of 2 books at our low advance price of \$9.95 each (total: \$19.90)—final price after publication will be higher. **Please, original work only** (no copyrighted characters, e.g. *Star Trek*, *Dark Shadows*, etc.)

[To see the kind of work the editors selected for their 1999 anthology, **Lower Than the Angels**, which featured work from Neil Gaiman, Jack Chalker, A.C. Crispin, Lawrence Watt-Evans, Bud Sparhawk, Balticon Young Writers Contest winners (age 18 and under), and many more, send \$17 (check or m.o.—includes postage) to: Lite Circle Books, P.O. Box 26162, Baltimore, MD 21210. For more info, email: [lite@toadmail.com](mailto:lite@toadmail.com).]

The Lite Circle Announces  
*The DarkLite Poetry Contest*



Lite Circle Books is sponsoring **The DarkLite Poetry Contest**. Entries should be Mystery, Gothic Horror, or Dark Fantasy poems of 30 lines or less. First, second, and third place prizes and certificates awarded. Winners published September 2001 in the book, **Through a Glass Darkly**. All entries considered for publication. Deadline: April 1, 2001. \$5 entry fee covers up to 2 poems, \$2 entry fee for any ad-

ditional poems. Include SASE for notification. Send poems and a check/money order payable to **Lite Circle, Inc.** for entry fee to: **DarkLite Poetry Contest**, P.O. Box 26162, Baltimore, MD 21210. More information: <http://litecircle.dragonfire.net> or email: [lite@toad-mail.com](mailto:lite@toad-mail.com). **Please, original work only** (no copyrighted characters, e.g. *Star Trek*, *Dark Shadows*, etc.)

[To see the kind of work the judges/editors selected for their 1999 StarLite Contest and anthology, **Lower Than the Angels**, which featured work from Neil Gaiman, Jack Chalker, A.C. Crispin, Lawrence Watt-Evans, Bud Sparhawk, and many more, send \$17 (check or m.o.—includes postage) to: Lite Circle Books, P.O. Box 26162, Baltimore, MD 21210. For more info, email: [lite@toadmail.com](mailto:lite@toadmail.com).]

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*Jessica, cont. from p. 13*

his as they spoke on the more subtle points of Mailer and Vonnegut.

The university, however, had a policy about professors dating students so he had resisted. There was also, of course, the complication of betraying a wife. So he ceased his part in the silent dance of signals. In response, she had withdrawn as well, confused, guessing that she had been mistaken in her perception of the interest.

Late in the term, each student was required to meet with the professor to discuss the topic for their term paper.

She was tentative when she knocked at his office door. "Professor?" she asked through the open door. "I'm here for my 1:30 appointment."

Packard barely looked up when she announced her arrival. His nervousness was given away only by his twirling the Montblanc in his hand. "Oh, right—it's Fitzpatrick, right?" he said, finally raising his gaze from the papers in front of him.

"Ye-sss," she said, dragging out the word to show her puzzlement at his attitude.

"Well, what's your topic going to be?"

Okay, it's going to be like this, she thought to herself. "I was going to cover the portrayal of social class in the early work of Updike."

"Interesting. Do you have an outline?"

She sat down in the empty chair by his desk, withdrew a typed three-page paper from her bookbag and placed it on Packard's desk between them. "I as going to start with 'The Poorhouse Fair.'"

As he went to take the outline, their fingers touched. Neither moved away. "I like that book," he said, finally looking at her directly, "very much."

They kept things discreet after that, meeting in other towns, flying to other places.

It completely floored Packard, then, when the dean called him into the office to go over university policy, stressing how perfectly promising careers in academia had been ruined by a lack of self control.

She didn't cry when he told her. Watching him with adoring eyes, she simply let him know what she would never let him go.

And he believed her.

*Four*

Anyone who ran across her outside of class would have been stunned at the company she kept. A quiet, thin girl, she had been witness to some interesting things done by her friends.

She wasn't generally a participant, but when she was with them, she wore the same clothes.

*Five*

Pierce took Torborg's advice and sent

the file back to its closed cabinet. What was the point of checking on a Miata that had been sitting underwater for a month anyhow? Especially when there were three hundred other files needing work.

Three days later, the caller reached him again. There was no introduction—just an insistent muffled voice.

"You didn't find it?"

The call caught Pierce by surprise. "Find what?"

"Find the car. You need to see what's in it. Find it now." The distant phone disconnected.

Pierce wondered how the caller knew he hadn't found the car. Genuinely curious, he retrieved the file again. His interest was definitely whetted now. Maybe a little adventure wouldn't be a bad way to spend the weekend.

*Six*

Torborg had reluctantly given Pierce the directions, which he in turn had gotten from a contact down in Broward. It took the investigator five hours to travel down I-95 to his exit and then west past a couple of ramshackle bait and tackle places to the start of what was left of the Everglades.

He had second thoughts about taking his company car, a Ford Escort, on the rough dirt road, but Torborg had told him it was no more than half a mile down the remote unpopulated stretch before he'd arrive at Chrome Lake. It was bumpy but he got there in one piece.

Pierce parked a few yards from the glittering water and got his diving equipment out of the trunk. In addition to thefts, he also handled claims involving yacht damage—underwater hull inspections were part of the job and he dove at least twice a month, although never for something like this. Considering where he was, he reached in and got his speargun out as well.

With the equipment on, the investigator waded into the quarry. He pulled on his fins, then his mask. He checked the flow of air through the regulator and went forward.

The edge dropped off quickly. Pierce swam downward. He had gone no more than a hundred yards when he saw the underwater junkyard, dozens of cars piled randomly and roughly, Hondas, Cadillacs, Fords and Saabs, the oldest at the bottom badly rusted and crushed from the weight of those above them.

He made a slow circle around the wrecks, his senses electric as he thought of alligators and water moccasins that could be swimming with him. He examined three Miatas, none of which had the correct identification numbers on their dashboards.

It was on his second pass that he saw the fourth Miata. It had smashed on the top of

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a particularly dense patch of cars, and had bounced off to settle on the side by itself.

Pierce swam over to inspect it.

He looked through the broken windshield and checked for the vehicle identification number on the dash. It was missing but there were no other Miatas nearby and this one, from its position, must have been dropped into the quarry fairly recently.

The Mazda was fairly stripped, with the doors and the seats missing.

He was beginning to swim away when he suddenly caught sight of something moving in the water outside the trunk. A blue cloth waved slowly in the water. Shock came over him in a wave and he shook himself to steady his nerves.

Pierce went to the trunk and tried to pry it open but it did not give. He swam back to the shore, fished the car keys out of his pocket, and took the tire iron out of his trunk. He sat against the side of the car, breathing slowly in the sunlight for a full minute to calm himself. His nerves restored somewhat, he went back in the water.

The trunk didn't open easily. It came floating open on the third try, slowly passing in front of Pierce's eyes to reveal its contents.

When Pierce saw skeletal remains, he felt bile coming up in his throat but, with Torborg's words screaming in his mind, he forced himself to look at the hands.

Both were mutilated in the prescribed pattern.

The investigator pushed away violently and shot to the surface. He clambered to the shore and threw up in the weeds along the bank. Then, with a shaky hand, he grabbed the cellular phone out of the glove compartment and began hitting in numbers.

#### *Seven*

When she was younger, when her mind was tranquilized, she could deal with things. That changed after the party.

She liked Professor Packard and thought it would be cool to have one of the guys in the gang dress cleanly and meet him. There was surprise when she saw the teacher and her date huddled in conversation for so long in the corner of the room. Even though she wasn't present, she blamed herself when she learned her friends, on behalf of the professor, had left a classmate discarded in the back of a sunken Miata.

After the job she had unwittingly set up, there were more frequent memories of herself as a child in church, distant persistent recallings of the fixed perfection of the saints silently urging her to the good. These same saints came into her highs now and condemned her.

She was not one to let emotion show. No one in the group ever questioned her loyalty. They would never have thought it possible it was she who had made the phone calls that led to the arrests of Packard and half-a-dozen of her nighttime friends.

But she had felt the close breath of devils, and would have done anything, short of letting herself be killed, to make them depart.



### Special Days

These last few days  
have sparkled,  
like multi-colored jewels  
set in burnished gold.  
Rubies,  
carnelians,  
amber and topaz  
against cerulean skies.

Transient treasures  
to soon vanish away  
with the coming of frost.  
The satin softness of chrysanthemums,  
the crimson rustle of falling leaves  
falling only to be lost  
or relegated  
to memory.

The swan-song of Autumn's glory  
is sung in crystal.

This sun-stained richness,  
the golden chalice of these hours  
holds no promise  
never to fade  
never to go,  
and the crispness in the air  
hints at snow  
and the transformation of these splended days  
into creations unknown.

Is it wrong to be dismayed?

Who would know?

And, if the truth were to be said  
who is there who is unafraid  
of losing  
special things.

*D. M. Eason*

### Night Song (3 O'Clock)

Let me hear you wail.  
Let me hear you slice the night  
like a banshee's howl.  
Let me hear you shatter the chains  
that bind man's heart to indifference.  
Let me hear you wail.

Let me hear the lamenting  
anguish in your song.  
Sing to me your tearful tale,  
painted indigo in the night,  
echoing beyond the deserted city streets.  
Let me hear you grieve.

Let me feel the blue hue of your voice.  
Let me hear it resound into the night,  
through the hazy, shrouded  
cloak of smoke  
and indigo.  
Let me hear you wail.

*Paul Hamoy*

### Awake

I awake to darkness.  
The morning has come late  
and the winter chill remains.  
My body tender  
under the blanket—  
my nipples hard  
and my lips parched and dry.  
I arise  
to wash away the madness  
from the cold bars I look out upon.  
The fog, ah the fog,  
how it hangs in a noose  
over the land, and then it dies.  
The sun bursts upon the horizon,  
shooting flames of glory into the night sky,  
and I can lick the dew  
that I walk upon.  
The fog arches over the mountains  
and disappears...  
leaving trails of mist in its departure.

*Stephanie Hiteshew*

### Bluebirds

On a dull winter morning  
when the orang ball of sun comes round  
a bird smaller than small  
darts from branch to branch on a naked tree.

I can't tell you why the bird  
flits about in a joyous spree  
or why another one comes by  
with a *chur-wi chru-wi* trill.

Two birds in pale blue uniforms  
perform a soldiers' drill  
and create a magical moment  
where none had existed before.

*Ron Arnold*

### Loss

My house is no longer a home.  
Its rooms are filled with ghosts.  
They haunt with pain instead of fear.  
They taunt with memories.

The voice of a child is buried here.  
He laughs and his footsteps shake  
cobwebs in the corner,  
dust among the books.

His fingerprints still smear the panes  
where once his crib had bounced  
with joy or angry tantrum  
for scenes beyond his window.

His room is empty now.  
No heat can warm its hollows.  
Cold, cold, Nothing follows.  
Cold, cold, cold.

*Frank Vogel*

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