

PRESENT
at the
CREATION
An Anthology

*Poets Write
About Writing Poetry*

Vilma Ginzberg and Doug Stout
Editors

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*to those who know
and
to those who would like to know
the joys of poetry*

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Introduction

You are now present at the sites of poetic creation. The poets in this collection have responded to our call for some description of the process they undergo when writing or sharing a poem. We were interested in personal renditions of the poet's unique experience and inner dynamic, the forms such energy takes, the personal landscape where it occurs, the struggle, exhilaration, expression of the impulse, all in poetic yet accessible language. We were not interested in writing that was tutorial, or so obtuse as to be inaccessible.

The poets who have generously agreed to share these experiences include adult writers of all ages, writers early or experienced, writers previously published and not, writers of other genres and not, writers who teach writers and writers who take their classes, writers of vocation and of avocation, all writers local to Sonoma County in Northern California.

If you are expecting, as a result of reading one or all of these works, to have found at last the secret of poesy, you will be mistaken.

If you are expecting to be surprised, delighted, touched, inspired, or understood, then welcome!

Vilma Ginzberg and **Doug Stout**, Editors
Healdsburg, California
June 2006

A Poet's Heart

Jennifer C. Weil

Wine, music, chocolate . . .
 For the connoisseur,
 nuance is everything—
 the sensibility to discern
 undertones in a fragrance,
 underlayers in a decanted glass
 vanilla bean in dark chocolate bark—
 here is an epicure of life,
 sprinkling word petals upon paper,
 leaving his impressions and reflections

to move one to the window
 to the shore
 to the table
 merely to see what he has seen,
 taste what he has tasted,
 touch what he has touched
 in gentle command of both poetry and the reader;
 his delight in the way a branch
 rests troughed on a damp beach
 makes one crave sand castles.
 All he wants is this,
 to reach into another person's heart
 and leave a gift
 light as a wafting blossom's breath,
 permanent as a soul.

Harvesters

Doug Stout

Tonight, harvest is
a gathering of poets
and readers of poetry
where the word is the fruit
of the language tree
ripened and textured by summer sense,
rich of odor and of flavor,
nourished by our trespasses,
victories and defeats,
delights and paradoxes,
feasts of mind and heart
coming to our plate
enriched of symbol, image, metaphor
and with this harvest tonight
we, the harvesters,
are celebrated,
validated, affirmed, renewed.

In the warm folds

Vilma Olsvary Ginzberg

I leave the warm folds of my bed's embrace
for some unremembered chore
cool air wraps me in goosebumps
hurries my step

crawling back into the featherbed softness
nearly forgotten in the cool journey
I am re-embraced by my own recent warmth
feel myself re-entering my own skin
my own life force breathing life back into
the chilled pilgrim I had become

this is why I write:
to be amazed by my own fire

this is why I read:
to crawl briefly into yours

Sonnet on Poetry*

David Beckman

Can words writ on water
(Apologies, Mr. Keats)
Sing away the world's clatter,
Or attain a snagged soul's release?

Once a gift for a heart bereft
Or balm for a life gone dry,
Can wrought words heal a world stone-deaf?
Is there room on the streets for poetry?

Can a poet working keyboard or pen
Trust that in some far room
A pair of eyes will cautiously open
To drink words back from oblivion?

Friend, my faith is that in reading this
Your answers are yes, yes, yes and yes.

*In attempting a poem about poetry, I decided to write a sonnet. I went back to John Keats, my favorite sonneteer. Googling him, I came up with a picture of his gravestone in Rome, and his words on it:

"Here lies one whose name is writ on water."

The Perfect Word

Jabez William Churchill

The perfect word
cuts,
glass shard
from a broken cup.
Burns
like coffee
gulped too fast
and repeats
indelible as sex
long into the morning after.
The perfect word,
wide-eyed seal,
watches through the water,
surfs
on every crest of inspiration.
Sleeps belly up and smiling
in the troughs.
The perfect word,
pearl slipped
one hungry mouth into another
melts unspoken
upon the tongue.

Where Is Your Poetry?

Michael L. Kamrath

Consider
the poetry of this world
not just the words specifically placed
through rhyme and rhythm
cadence or colors blended between
an iridescent blue dragonfly in a spring meadow
or the rackata rackata whoosh of an L train

Rather
the poetry of a carpenter
fitting dowel to wood
mortise to tenon
the school crossing guard with upraised
red octagon sheltering her bevy between
twin yellow lines
and more lines
those ignored and looked past copper lines
of light and sound strung
from pole to pole to home to shop
a spider web of human ingenuity

The poetry of the mechanic turning the wrench
adjusting listening adjusting
the froth of a cappuccino
with brown zig zag lines of leaf or heart
a liquid mandala
beauty created for the moment
that is all there is after all
the moment

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