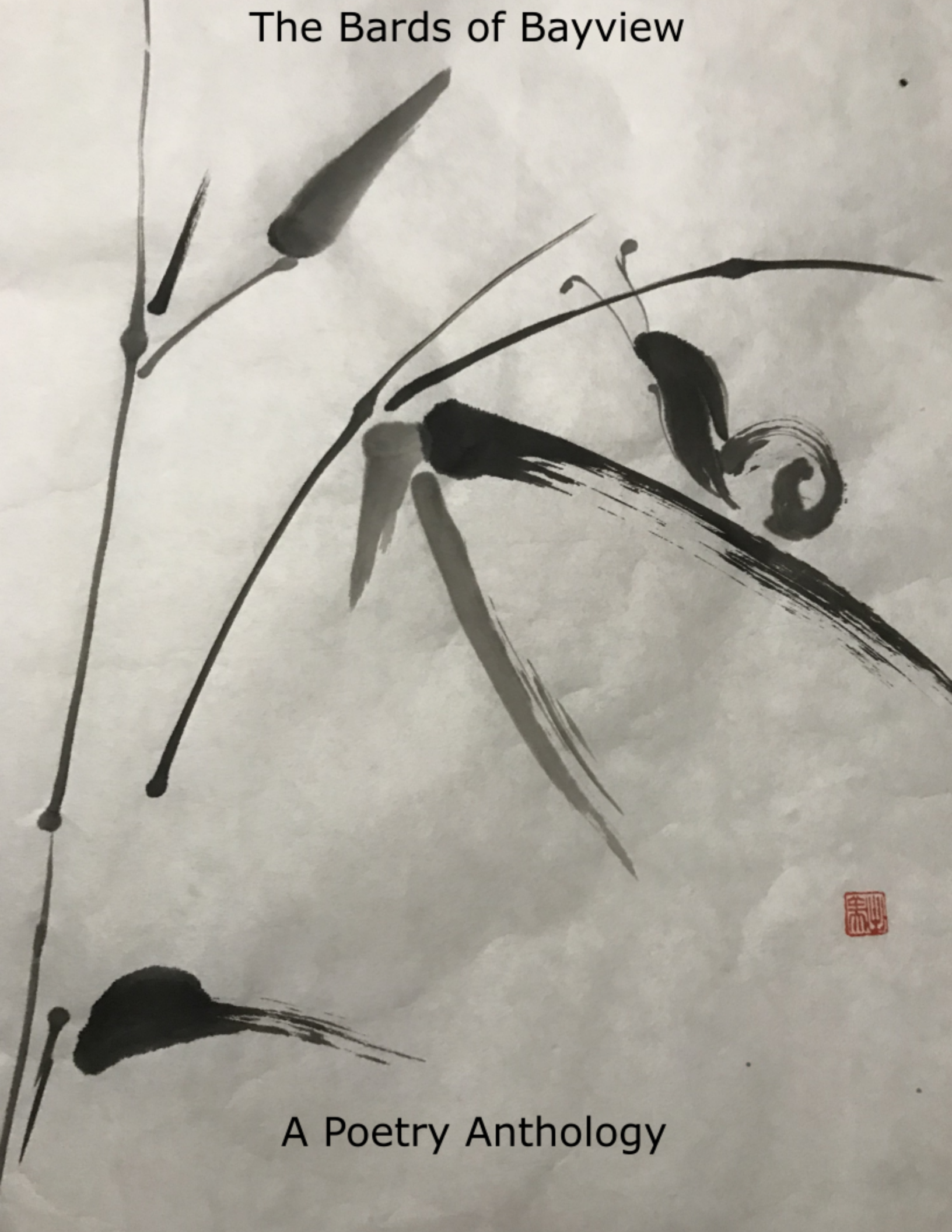


The Bards of Bayview



A Poetry Anthology

This anthology was created by Pacifica Writers' Workshop. Pacifica Writers' Workshop inspires and unleashes creativity for people of all ages. We provide creative writing opportunities through classes, workshops, camps, and tutoring. Original curricula is written and taught by published authors and seasoned instructors.

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<http://pacificawritersworkshop.com/>

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BAYVIEW

Pacifica Writers' Workshop



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A Note from the Editors

I must admit, when I started the Bayview Poetry Workshop four years ago, I had no idea what to expect. I was also a little frightened. *Would anyone even show up?*

Thankfully, some folks did show up and that day we read a poem by Kay Ryan, talked about the metaphors she used, and then shared original work composed in the workshop. And that has been the format ever since. Weekly during these eight-week sessions, our brave participants have stood up and shared their hearts with an attentive group. We have grown a lot since that first class, some people have left and some new faces have arrived. But through it all the group has retained a cerebral and soulful comradery.

I could sense a little of this on our first day. The eagerness of the participants to express themselves and their deep concern for each other was unlike anything I had ever seen in a writing workshop. Every once in a while, we have the opportunity to participate in something that becomes greater than the sum of its parts. Maybe it's attending a Mariners game which becomes a come-from-behind victory. Maybe it's a vacation which becomes an adventure we still tell our friends and family about years after it's over. This is what happened with our workshop. Yes, we meet to write and discuss poetry, but afterwards I often leave with a whole new perspective on what it means to be a human being.

The following anthology is our attempt to document the magic of this workshop. There have been times when we laughed, cried, sang, and even danced together. This is a unique and important group, and what I mean is that in some strange way it feels necessary that this collection of individuals meets around a table to learn from each other by sharing thoughts and memories. I am honored that I have been given the privilege to record some of those thoughts and memories here. And to anyone picking up this volume in the future, please know that we lived and for a time we braided poems together in the sparkling grey hair of this abundant universe.

Sincerely,
Benjamin Schmitt

The Bards of Bayview

Warrior Women

by Debra Marrs

These valiant women step forward to pick up their armor
They harken to the gallant messages
Brought forth by those who have fought before them.
Joan of Arc, Suffragettes, Lozen, an apache Woman Warrior
And they lift their battle cry!

We are Warriors. Warriors? Yes, Warriors!

Not looking back...charging forward
Armed with combat capabilities
Ready to take a stand.

Rallying around each other, no soldier left behind.
Sensing there is no other way to go.

We are Warriors. Warriors? Yes, Warriors!

Advancing, March, march marching, Evolving.
Letting our demands be known.
Taking the hill, securing the bridges
Exploding with the power to change what has been for so
long.
Fiery arrows shower down.

Our words spilling forward with disarming designs
Onto what will await us on the other side.

We are Warriors. Warriors? Yes, Warriors!

Womaning up!
Gazing across the battlefield to what lies beyond--
Anticipating that tender, loving, peacefulness that will rise
from the smoke and ashes.

Taking Off the Ring*by Debra Marrs*

Taking off a family,
Taking off the pain.
How to justify it,
But not taking on the blame.

Crazy---making,
With those nighttime awake nightmares.
Haunting dark memories, that at dawn,
turn back into a happy little family without cares.

Taking off the years of sadness,
Not able to tell a soul.
Why did it take so long?
What could have been the goal?

An addict's lies are hurtful,
Denial seems to always turn its back on you.
Then you sit and wonder,
Whatever did I do?

Taking off the myth
That you can't be loved.
Find a way in these last years,
To catch a break, to find clarity, my dove.

Two impressions in my skin
Round my finger tell the story of
A small wedding stone,
A tiny little love.

It's Late

by Debra Marrs

It's late.
My father's voice comes to me.
"Did you gather the eggs?"
"Oops, Oh Fudge, Dang it!"
I forgot to do my chores.

Now the yard light
only scoops out a small portion,
of the pitch black Western Plain
I am now forced to navigate.

The maze
takes me
past the garage,
where cavernous cattle
and humungous hogs
once hung
draining, dripping
in preparation
for a breakfast table
butchering.

Jogging by Dad's "junk house"
visions of old mowers with rusty blades,
hanging winter tire
snow chains,

crimson Folgers coffee cans
filled with murky layers
of nails, bolts, and screws,
shadows of spring-loaded bear traps
used to catch
an occasional snarling badger.
Sidestepping the tractor tire,
a giant pushed on its side,
choked and drowned in sand.

Past a mountainous brown pile of baling wire,
wrapped neatly,
used for binding most anything.

Past small tumble weeded cages,
to the door

of the paint peeling,
brick-red
chicken house.

I must gather at least a few warm white orbs,
as proof.

I high step over the metal railing
that guides the sliding wooden door.
Look in the big mailbox-sized nests
for a delivery of fresh whites
and deep flavorful, orange yokes.
To be a special delivery
to my morning plate.

When no eggs are visible I must reach in
and bravely
pull off the chicken
she is as wide-eyed with fear as me.

I tell myself, reach in, do it like your dad has shown you so many times before.

But no, I get a 2 X 4 and squish the squatty white balloon shape with red head out
without breaking a thing.
And place the pearly treasures in my pouched shirt.

I scurry past the mice
That I know will go up my pant leg.
(My mother's greatest fear.)
But they only retreat to holes in the dirt floor.

I traverse all the way back through dark places
past the ghost-eye tree, by the shadowy, smelly outhouse,
where I know the Boogie Man is lurking.

When I get to the front stoop
memories of a rattlesnake
coiled in the warmth of the sun
fill my head.

I tiptoe around the edge
to rest my back on the door.
Heart pounding,
sweat forming,
slowing my heaving chest.

Then, walk in coolly,
like nothing has happened.

The home delivery of fresh eggs
who knew such a simple task could be so terrifying?

Images of War

by *Leanna Anderson*

Ask a very little child that is left to spend days in a dark underground shelter, with many other children whose fathers are fighting the war and mothers have joined the labor force to win.

Ask a question to someone who has been to war. If the memory is old, they may answer you. If the memory is fresh, they avoid your eyes and talking.

Ask a young bride what it was like to send her newly married husband to war. She brings out a senior year book and shows you the pictures of the senior class with the caption underneath, *enlisted*.

Ask your father who flies to his brother's funeral after he jumps off the San Francisco Bridge when his enlistment is up.

Ask a German-born wife you have become friends with, "where is your family?" She shyly goes to her bedroom. Trustingly, she brings out a picture of her father in an SS uniform.

Ask your best friend's father; who gives you a flag from a young man's coffin, who fought in his regiment. There isn't any family to receive this honor.

The honor flies on our home every year. The colors are faded, the moths have attacked. The memory grows old.

That is one interesting thing about war.

The memory grows old until the next war.

A Poem for a Child

by Leanna Anderson

I found where the mermaid sleeps in a hammock made of kelp.
The rhyming caressing of waves swaying her back-n-forth.

The sunlight on her body radiating florescent greens and blues.
Like Jewels from some lost treasure.

Her long hair captured by the sea grass flows over the rocks and back again.
She is deep in sleep as deep as the ocean she prevails.

The cathedrals of rocks, with hanging chandeliers of seaweed, hide the starfish
Who come out to hold her hand.

Her friends the sea otters bob their heads looking to see if she wants to play.
Not today, will she twist and turn and play their games of tag.

For today she is listening to the lullaby of the ocean.
Restoring her energy to protect the home she loves.

Kale

by Leanna Anderson

You have been thrust into the limelight from an obscure, bleak life.
The multitudes proclaim your benefits.
The purists raise accolades to your abilities.
The learned scholars move to adore you more.
You have handled your admirers well.
You carry yourself in the same humble ground you were born in.
Reaching up to the sun, digging deep into the earth.
You raise your face to the drops washing energy to your core.
You have captured us all with your fame and goodness.
Except.....A five-year-old who stares stubbornly at the plate refusing to touch your
petals of life.
You can wait patiently, as you have in the past, for the unknown to be.
Yes, even to the young.

RE-ENTRY BLUES*by Ted Rodgers*Deju Vu

Well, the outpost is over,
 At last I'm home,
 But, Wow, it's dj vu.
 I've been here, done this, seen it.
 I think I'd rather be on the roam.
 Wouldn't you?

Semantic Satiation

Like saying a word again and again,
 Until it loses its sense.
 I'm semantically satiated,
 And I live my word in past tents.

Phantom Limb

I'm scratching an itch that isn't there,
 Way out on a phantom limb.
 Where are the legs I used to kick
 In my distant ocean's swim?

Incompletion

I've left my destiny incomplete,
 Distant crises left to solve.
 But what will happen now that I'm home?
 The crises may just dissolve.

Friendly Insouciance

"You lived THERE, must have been great!
 Tell us exotic tales."
 But if your story is more than one-line,
 Firm friends' fascination fails.

Stimulus Deprivation

With exotic conditions I've had to cope,
 Solving problems's what makes us alive.
 But the problems here I've all seen before.
 I'm terminally stimulus deprived.

Obsolescence

I know I was skilled before I left,
 Technology's changed the game.
 I've become obsolescent in this short time.
 There's new children I can't even name.

Expendability

I was the critical link in the chain,
 They couldn't do without.
 But somehow the chain is holding fine,
 I'm the expendable gadabout.

Invisibility

In my foreign port, they knew who I was,
 And most even knew my name,
 Here's home and I feel invisible.
 I'm waterboy at the game.

Deja Vu

Well, the outpost is over,
 At last I'm home.
 But, Wow, it's dj vu.
 I've been here, done this, seen it.
 I think I'd rather be on the roam.
 Wouldn't you?

Ode to Ace Bentbeak*by Ron Gillette*

Ode to my good friend, Ace Bentbeak, a Kiwi bird.
A sad story indeed that before no one has heard
A great hurricane passed over his small comfy fold
And he came out to investigate, or so I am told.

He challenged the force—a brave soul of course.
The poor little guy bounced off buildings, trees and poles
Until breaking his beak, yet he set forth,
Enduring the weather, so to speak.
This brave friend of mine tried so hard to fly,
Yet bounced off the earth, much more than the sky.

His feathers are now so disheveled,
And his beak now much more beveled.
His supple little body is a terrible mess,
Yet I admire him not a tad less.
My hat's off to Ace, my mentor,
With whom I try to keep pace.

I rescued him, after all, for 50 cents, from a garage sale
So now I will end this very sad tale.

Richard Metz*by Ron Gillette*

In 1945, Richard Metz was a neighbor of our family
when we lived in Rose City outside of Portland, Oregon.
Richard, probably barely 20, took an interest in me as a very young boy,
And always gave me a ride on his bicycle, usually around the golf course
Nearby which gave me great joy.
Suddenly one day he was gone.
Mom told me, as remembering back,
That Richard was taken into the army
And his time away would probably be very long.
Then mom told me Richard would never be here again
For he was killed in the war.
The pain felt, my heart began to tear. It's just not fair.
Even today, I see the scar on my ankle
When it caught in the spokes of Richard's bicycle
And shaved it to the bone.
I bore this scar and also the loss
And thinking of Richard engrossed in thought and feeling so alone.
Richard's gone away and ever to stay.

Spring*by Ron Gillette*

A changing of the guard is in progress.
This is becoming the effervescence of the beginning
Of the season time of spring.
Oh such a pleasant ring
As the fresh smell of a time
In which we choose and love to cling.
Imagine a teenage man watching all of his horizons
Of interest blossoming all at one period of time.
The excitement of more beautiful and fascinating wonderments
And participations than he could ever choose from.
The sophomoric foundation of his girders,
Wobbling, bending, as if reaching in all directions at once,
Soaking in all the changes throughout his surroundings
And even within his mind and body.
Not one living person knows the impact of joy
Or consequences of this experience
And not even this young man.
Be strong, wise, and pliable and blend well with the rigors
Of change and time, my dear young friend.

We're Springing

by Joy Semberg

Spring Sun splashes down
all over us each sweet
Morning.

Springs soaks us through to our thirsty Souls each
Day.

She spares us not a
Drop. While Spring birds
Trill their reviving Songs
All over our heads and
Hearts. Oh! The new
Ancient wise Bees buzz
Their furry songs that
Tease our glad Tears
That Again we Eat and
Survive even Each Other.

Buds pop on waking
Trees and stretching bushes as Spring rocks
The gardens.

Snapdragons, sweet peas, dandelions, / and scurrying gophers' tails / crowd the eager
soils.

From the gate,
You can feel the bursting green of the grasses
Pumped with gushing
Chlorophyll can almost be heard dripping into the
Waiting tiny garden tendrils.

Perky dogs, 220 volts
Energy, pull on electric
Legs past a chin high
Ice cream unwatched.
Well. It was. Chin. High.

Power feline fat cats
Glide sun-soaked concrete
Sidewalk sprawls
Or Date and yawn
Wide and toothy white

Gibberishing Toddlers flip excited hand signals out of canopied strollers.
A passing peeled banana
Passes to Toddie!
Toddie shared some diaper fumes and nose runs.

Another garden nears.
Early stark whites that showcase some lavender. Can you hear
These buds popping?

Who can dare tromp
Rubber, mud-squishing
Boots through her
Fragile moss laces?

Breathe in that Mulch!
Yes ! Ride the Ripe,
Wild, unyielding rush
Of randy, raucous
Spring !

Winning is Strange, Like Losing

by Joy Semberg

Tiny fire bits descend.
 Players shrug thin
 Shudders with each
 Other. Who's gonna
 Win This One?
 Tonite we're on Fire,
 Lord!
 Seattle Times tracks
 Q B Wilson's sleepless
 In Seattle nites getting
 It right. Print outs to the
 Staff "All kinds of
 Suffering hours."

Says Brian S. And a
 Guess. Who else sleeps
 Less?

The night before
 The GAME
 Friends popping over
 Soups from hot stoves.
 Biscuits & gravy from the Navy next door
 with fat beans & bacon. Maybe a shot of whiskey too?
 Now you're talking turkey!

Both teams huddle up
 Beneath heavy skies
 Players without houses
 Carrying aching hurts
 Stuffed like usual
 Down their shirts.

Looks shift to
 Each other
 Then huge Inhaled breaths
 Their Victory! Cries!
 S E A H A W K S !!
 C H A R G E R S !
 Explode to the Skies! !

Ace Novelty Fire*by Richard Anderson*

Past the soreness stage of lifting weights
I've pushed myself too far barely crawling up the stairs to retire
Dreaming lazily...Gong hits...BONG...BONG...BONG
Step into boots...pull up red suspenders...slide pole
We're heading way out of our district...hope it's an easy one
It's not... 3 floors of fire...and I'm in the basement...and lost
3 inches of visibility, thick rubbery smoke, of burnt toys and raingear
Click...ring...I've got 5 minutes left of air to get out
I drop the 200' hose in 2 feet of water and follow it out, hand over hand
Take a break...Fire Buffs offer coffee, donuts...tastes like rubber
Some pull out a cigarette...most just close their eyes
Then we struggle to get to our feet... noticing the fire has blown through the roof
We're summoning strength for the battle ahead
We go back in again, and again and again until we run out of air tanks
Then we go back in again and again and again.
We coughed up tarry black smoke for weeks after.
I still visit the site, 9 young athletes, with clean faces
And tarry bats, run the bases, with powdery blue skied Safeco Field
Unaware of our smoky plight decades ago.

SHIFTING, SHIFTING SAND*by Richard Anderson*

Small rocks swept this way and that...
singing their song...
The Waves caress and kiss...
and in their own way tell them they belong...
time passes and they
become one
the lover and the loved...
and whom is to say which is which...
... NONE

Rye Bread

by Richard Anderson

He wished to choose which pyre to die on
The hot slice of a saber, or the silent bullet slicing through life,
Or the cold December numbness bringing an endless sleep.

He left his Russia... cannon... horses in haste
Pushed to an Easterly ice-covered shore as far as the eye could see
To die...with last remaining White Army...pursued at by hands of the Red.

Hope was offered for a few young men in providence of
A found fisherman's boat to haul, scrape and pull over the frozen ice
To a seam of water yet unfrozen in Vitus Bearing's Sea.

The open boat battered by swollen waves
So cold the Artic wind blew salty mist off wave crests
Into ice shrapnel, as if the Red Army cannon was still pursuing

The men rowed East as long as they could... to a death
Or a freedom on a Westerly shore...night after night
They oared in a blackness with only rye bread crumbs pocked in haste

He carried few possessions of the past from his Mother Russia
A 10-string guitar, only a handful of people now played
And the only thing he wished to bestow on his new foreign home.

Untitled

by Eugenia Smith

1770. How did our Constitution--our country--ever happen?

People living a few families together.

Too well-informed on the intimate lives of their neighbors.

No knowledge of those ten miles away.

How did they even imagine such a society wherein men/not women/voted for such a
world?

United in purpose into a community whose aim was the well-being of all those strangers.

Today. So much information. But do we yet think of the well-being of all?

Washington DC

by Margaret DeLacy

In 1944, we had a chance to move to DC.
What a great adventure for a girl of just 3.
We rode to the Capitol on a Great Northern train.
Giving preference to the soldiers was really no strain.
Unlike Seattle, the summers were hot.
Did I like the humidity? I think not.

And when I would play in the back yard there,
My poor mom had to remove ticks from my hair.
My dad, bless his heart, took me to Congress,
Where I sat with him
as Roosevelt delivered
his Yalta address.

Not long after that, we all had a cry
As we watched FDR's funeral go by.
I was on my dad's shoulders, looking over his head
And innocently asked, "Is he really dead?"

Spring

by Margaret DeLacy

She's ancient, yet ageless
She's been here forever.
She's arrogant and haughty,
Yet humble and coy.

Her beauty is fleeting,
But she ages quite well.
On a very large scale
She's a female Lazarus,
Drawing life from death,
With a palate of colors
That takes away your breath.

She sets things in motion
To replenish the earth.
Until the death of winter
Serves its dark dearth.

Circles

by Margaret DeLacy

The circle of life
Goes on forever. We're born,
We live for an unknown time, and we die.
We live within our family circle, which branches out,
Bearing fruit or breaking off. We add or remove people
From our circle. Our family circle is by birth or by choice.
Circles are everywhere in our lives. Golden bands around
Our fingers, golden globes in the sky. A silver orb at night
Surrounded by tiny round dots of light. The continuity of
Circles are perfect, miraculous and amazing, complete
Within themselves, yet can expand to include
More, or shrink to encompass less. We
Live in and are supported by a circle
Of friends, who live on a beautiful
Circular planet.

A Brand New Day*by La Juan Mattson*

We wake up every morning
To a brand new day

It is our choice what we
Do and what we say

Whom we choose to be with
And how we use our time

It is when we have passion that
We have a rhythm and a rhyme

So go about your day

Purposefully use it well

Live your life with so much passion
That anyone can tell

Flight of a Dove*by La Juan Mattson*

As we gaze upon the stars in the sky above
We know God gives us so many blessings
And the greatest is his love
As we go about our lives each day
We communicate with him as we pray
He talks to us from heaven above
And reminds us to share our love
As our heart beats with the rhythm of a drum
Sometimes we realize our heart has gone numb
Awaken your heart and give your love
Gently.....Gracefully
Like the beautiful flight of a dove

BRING A STICK

by La Juan Mattson

WOW what is all the fury about????

What is going on???

They are screaming...“he is going to hit us with a stick”...I am confused.

Oh!! He comes from out of sight with his stick. He is intimidating and they are afraid of him.

I go over to him and tell him to give me the stick. He says “why” mocking me with his tough and arrogant behavior. And I say, “because I said so!!!”

Not on my watch was he going to hit anyone with his stick and arrogance.

He lost his demeanor of being bold and I can see his body relax.

He has lost his stick and therefore has lost his power over all the other kids.

I am mystified that I have this stick and I am concerned that it was to be used in such a violent way.

I slowly walk home with my stick Ben has asked us to bring.

I am concerned that I consider this stick with such violence and fear.

I put my stick in my kitchen and look at it.

I have a change in how I am looking at this stick and the history it had for me that was so threatening.

I realize this stick can be associated with warm thoughts and uses that are good.

It could be a baton to lead an orchestra if the conductor has lost his baton and cannot find it.

It could be a tool for an old man in a rice field that he treasures and uses to plant in his field. It would lighten his burden and put a smile on his face.

Or it could be a young man pretending it is a snake as he impresses his friends with his bravery.

I will treasure that stick to remind myself life is good and this stick will bring good and warm thoughts to my life.

I must have an attachment to this stick reminding me to look at the good in my life.

SILENCE

by William Clarke

Three in the morning---

Finally I can open the window toward the busy street, now not busy at all.

The birds are asleep.

Nearly everyone else, too---

Even the phone, thank God, won't ring, I hope.

Now, my thoughts can flow with the freedom they love.

Now, I know new things---

Remember, better, some old things that I didn't know I knew before.

Thoughts flowing,

 slowing,

 stopping...

Then coming connectedly,

A melody, sung silently.

Yet inexorably,

To an implicit end.

BACH

by William Clarke

God's Time is best
To rhyme at home
And rest

* "Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit"
Cantata # 106

Haiku

by Colleen O'Brien

A lavender speck
Appears on a white canvas
The first sign of Spring

Blind Date

by Colleen O'Brien

I stared out the window,
My mouth agape, as the
Black and white vehicle
Floated slowly up the street
And stopped in front of my house

My date for the evening had arrived

The driver was an extension of the car itself...
Black side-burns swept up high,
Streaked with white and suspended
In thin air on each side of his face

Do I answer the door?

Who knew?

by Colleen O'Brien

Who knew I was a poet?
I certainly didn't know it!

Who knew I could pen a haiku?
In truth, it was easy to do.

Consonance or assonance
Simply a series, sometimes nouns.

Alliteration is where it's at.
Ben, our bard of Bayview taught us that.

This I now know for sure,
A poem is neither right nor wrong.

So, short or long, make it yours,
Make it your heartsong.

Bios and Memories

Leanna, Tomsic, Anderson: I am a true-blue Seattleite all my life. We have two children, four grandchildren, three great grandchildren, whom I enjoy and write for. I am married to Richard Anderson. We are celebrating our 57th anniversary. We share an interest in the written word together. Along with a lifetime of memories. My passions are: family, friends, my home, and gardening. Poetry has been a path of discovering ideas I never knew existed in myself....What fun.

Richard Anderson, Virgo, born, before the great war, in a small Washington State seaport town called Edmonds. Wore many blue-collar hats and uniforms. Left home during his middle teens made his life's goals early and then met Leanna, Aries, on a beach while camping and fishing. I knew she was it, fireworks, passion, we talked for 4 hours and I was sold on her without a survey. We planned and built our life's ship together, each adding their dreams, goals, planks and sweat. Along our voyage we have been blessed with 2 children, 4 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren and will be celebrating our 58th year of marriage. Poetry, for me is means to convey my history of people I've met and events that have affected me and my scruples. One's mission in life is to find one's passion, work to attain goals and be happy and enjoy your sail through life.

William Clarke was born in Portland, Oregon---Seattle resident since age ten---Doctor of Music in Conducting (University of Washington, 1972). Operatic experience in Germany; professional organist/choir director in Seattle churches; Director of the Seattle Bach Society.; numerous musical-theater productions, concerts, oratorios; piano accompanist; Bethany Presbyterian Church member/Roman Catholic; composer of songs, 2 musicals, anthems; author of DR. STANLEY CHAPPLE.

Margaret DeLacy: I was born and mostly raised in Seattle, with jaunts to Washington DC and the ghetto in Cleveland, Ohio and an extended stay in Southern and Northern California, all of which provided me with a more rounded and interesting perspective on life. My parents were college educated and as I grew, I was lucky enough to be surrounded by fascinating books and the freedom to explore the outdoors. Probably my most exciting day was when I learned to read, which allowed me to explore the printed world. I love the written and spoken word and the impact it has on ones imagination and emotions. I love the play of words, the fun of words and the sound of words. For me, poetry allows all of this to take form.

Ron Gillette: I am a native Washingtonian, although my dad's career as a radio announcer allowed our family to move to Malibu, California and various cities in Oregon. My father finally retired from KJR in Seattle. I was fortunate to spend a year at Queen Anne High School, where I met, and finally, 37 years later, married the girl I dated while at Queen Anne. I never thought I could write poetry, but now I feel poetry has allowed me to express myself in so many different, and creative, ways.

Debra Marrs is a Denver-born middle daughter of a Colorado Plains farming family. After college at the University of Northern Colorado and teaching the Deaf and Hearing Impaired in Iowa, she moved to Seattle to study dance. She has worked teaching highly capable kindergarten,

first and second grade children for 39 years. After teaching poetry to elementary school children for so many years, she wanted to try writing her own big-girl poetry and loves sharing it with her grown daughter, poetry groups and friends. She enjoys gardening, reading, Dahn yoga, sumi painting, cooking and continuing to explore, learn and grow.

La Juan Mattson: Born in Lubbock, Texas on a dairy farm. Moved to Oregon to live in cottages my grandparents owned. Next stop moved to Seattle. The house we moved into had a basement lined with books of many adventures. Next we moved to the Indian Village of La Push, Washington. It was a total haven for an 8 year old tomboy. After that I met "The Love of My Life". Paul was diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma. I loved to ski especially in Colorado. Loved to go hunting with my husband and be surrounded by nature and stillness of being content. God has blessed me with a wonderful life full of many adventures.

Colleen O'Brien: When I first joined Ben's poetry workshops, I knew very little about poetry, much less poets, but I knew it would be an opportunity to stretch and grow. These workshops have been a gift. I've had an opportunity to document some of my life memories in a safe, respectful, and loving setting. As a group we've bonded by sharing our memories, shedding a few tears, but always sharing lots and lots of laughs!

Ted Rodgers has, I think, the unique title of "Professor of Psycholinguistics" at the University of Hawaii. The title is now Emeritus since I have left Hawaii and am now living in Seattle. I have spent 20 years living in other countries usually fronting some type of educational institutional development. A lot of my poetry is either educational (e.g. to help memorize foreign language vocabulary) or historical (e.g. the history of Turkey in verse) or comic doggerel. Usually in meter and rhyme. Not all.

Joy Semberg is a Minister to the Homeless, Abused, and Abandoned. She is also a Craniosacral Therapist/Reiki Master, #METOO Memoirist and Author, Performance Poet, Survivor, Thriver, and a Lifelong Student.

Eugenia Smith gained an A.B. from George Washington University 1953. Fulbright scholarship to Paris, 1954-1955. MA University of Wisconsin, 1964. Lectured in Art and Architectural history at University of Hawaii and Northern Virginia community college. Married a Navy officer. Biannual moves prevented future employment, so she paints.

