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Poetry of Western Oregon

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FIREWEED

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Send *Fireweed* email to jazzpo@iccom.com

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Carter Mckenzie

POEM

It was knowing
what I needed to do
after the wingstroke.
That delicacy
changed nothing.
Small clutch
of feather and bone.
Eyes like polished seeds.
All of this in my hands
resisting in its last
memory of fear
and flight.

Beverly Partridge

BORDERS OF RESCUE

Red Rover, Red Rover,
let a redhead come over.
Not if I catch you first.

You bring an umbrella,
they say, "I'm fine
don't bother with me."

You fix them breakfast
before they wake up
eggs, toast, and coffee

served with linen next
to their bed. "I never eat
breakfast, never in bed."

Prisoners are flighty
ready to leave, eager
for rescue, home free.

You offer to drive by
and pick them up,
"No, no, I'll come by for you."

Mother insists, let me
help. "Nonsense," you say,
"I'm fine."

Mother, may I
take ten steps forward
two sideways, perhaps?

Is the crack in the sidewalk
considered a square? How many
jumps to your side?

If you capture my flag
I must kneel at your feet.
Come, let's play it again.

Beverly Partridge

SAMMY AT 12

We who are bereft of lightning
in our lives look to the clouds
which bunch together, spread out

grow large and ponderous
like mountains,
wispy like girls newly women

bumping into each other,
trailing along after,
rushing to keep up.

Last night one thundered through
the waning summer night, a single mass
of darkness playing the boogey man.

Twelve year old Sammy ran out
into the backyard, raised her arms
to the sky, yelled "Kansas",
and screamed for more as a sudden
flash scared her to laughter.

"Listen," she said, "we will hear thunder,"
counting one thousand and one, one thousand
and two, one thousand and three.

Tuned into the universe
she had suddenly reached my eye,
suddenly conquered the piano.

suddenly was in charge of her time
alone after school.

When the Spanish doll with black braids
hair parted in the middle
arrived in the mail.

She had paid for it herself.

Charles Goodrich

SLOWING DOWN

Bum knees, trick back –
can't turn earth like I used to.
Garden and spine both shrinking,
soul and soil inexorably converge.

Tongue's sluggish, too. Among talkers
I'm the clod. My grubby clothes,
once anti-fashionable and proud,
finally become me. The dirt
under my nails is there for good.

Odd compensation though – poems
hold still under my slow gaze.
I read with a withering regard
that shames the silliness out of them,
makes them cough up their gobbets of wisdom.

Small triumph, perhaps,
but I can finally distinguish
a true leap of mind
from a mere *non sequitur*.

Charles Goodrich

SPARROW AND FLEA

You're a sparrow, an old
grass widower, struggling to sleep
under a half-dead juniper
in the Good Samaritan Hospital parking lot.

You are utterly alone
except for a flea
who's driving you crazy with insomnia.

*The cold
should have knocked that sucker off by now,
you think, peering out
across acres of frost-furred asphalt.*

At the buzz and flick of a failing streetlamp
you have to laugh: *that's me,
sputtering lonesome
and almost out of juice.
Beak's blunt. Feathers
have lost all their loft.
Toes so numb I can't feel the branch.*

Another bite on the neck
revives you. *Bastard!*
Go suck a human.
You pin the flea
under a talon and bear down,
but then, reconsidering,

you mutter an ugly croak
and let it go.

Charles Goodrich

THE TERRAVORES

I'm going to miss them,
those lumbering yellow road-graders,
bulldozers and belly-scrapers
grazing at the edge of town.

I'll miss watching them with my small son
as they unerringly peel the face
from the wheat field, the thrill
and terror in his eyes.

And, most of all, I will miss
their awful placidity
at night, bedded down
in the moonshade of scorched oaks
like perfect beasts.

Sherron Norlen

TALKING DHARMA

for Mick

Talking dharma, the red-pigtailed ex-
con laughs, giggles at his day's rush –
smooth toward dinner

guests, cleaning house
among his children, picking up
their scattered toys, last minute

button he sews on his good pants, white
shirt, the warm-cotton smell, wrinkles
evaporating under his iron's hot press,

its flat-light gloss absorbing thought, joy
bubbling, the miracle after a good scrub
when the toilet bowl comes clean.

BEGINNER'S LUCK

This eleventh autumn we keep
our clothes on even
after we make a mattress of leaves.
He, on top of me for
a first kiss. *The edges of your body glow*
my voice tells our doubled self,
as he gently pushes up, away,
and I feel like an imprint he's made –
a snow angel in flaxen leaves. I spread my
arms, wave up and down in the fallen
needles and other, softer tree feathers.

After that I trust him
to carry me safely
on the handlebars of his bike.
He weaves in and out of puddles,
makes intricate designs with
newly wet tires
on the hot parts of pavement,
and though sometimes he spreads
his arms wide, we never crash.

One evening together in
a tree house abandoned by someone
who's grown too far past childhood,
we sit cross-legged.
Opposites: mirrors.
We'd slipped by the witch's house,
gone further into the forest
than her hungers.

Flashlights under our chins
bring us new faces.
It's these faces who hum
in perfect pitch, who next shine
flashlights into our fists.
It looks as if
our hearts have migrated into our hands.
I'm not sure,
looking at the backside of my skin,
through a beam of light strong as a shooting star,
if the webbed twigs inside
are the larger, hidden ends
of my finger bones, or if they're the ropes
that weave in and out inside my heart.

Then he waves his new hand,
a red flag to you, he says
across that tree house,
up and down
the border between our bodies.

When our hearts change
to red-hot coals,
we're afraid we'll burn
down the forest before we know
that they're just signals,
know that our hands are our hearts,
that we don't know who we've become.

Diane Averill

A SUDDEN AWARENESS OF AGING
IN SPRING

From the partly open window
there's a bell-like zing
as if a presence slightly
familiar from another life
has just touched the hair
on my bare arms. I hover motionless
over the cooling dish water
as spring's first hummingbird
finds my feeder. It backs away
from me, becoming a red jewel
in my blue morning.

I take chipped red dishes
from the drainer, place their plain music
on my wooden table.
But when I look outside now
the day has turned against me,
gone grey. My hands are two crows
covering my eyes as evening
slowly reaches for the sky.

Dan Raphael

MORNING LETS

morning lets the cat in, puts the heat on
what night took away night crawled back into

waking up with an infinite desert on the horizon
with black wings circling like apostrophes
to show connection or elision, to create a relationship
to keep a couple afloat,

sign on the dotted line, cut
on the dotted line: my computer gives me dozens of lines
to choose from or customize

what's my line

i want you to line up in a circle

some of us are tangents

some of us are waiting for the sphere
assuming im the leading edge of some dimension, a way of recycling
like the worms and fungi im so receptive to,
receiving the stray suppressed unlabeled
absorbing their inner gasses, the aroma-spins
that fright and entice

coz a distant horizon means we can see what's coming
while a drop off or mountain promises the unknown,
which we all know we'll have too much of one day

like a morning that's 10 years later than i expect
or i didn't think would happen this soon:

face meets linoleum

face finds the bed empty

& the car gone

hand turns the thermostat

but no heat comes

i flick the light switch

& the bulb goes nova

Elizabeth McLagan

JANE AUSTEN IN MARCH

A footfall, barely
conceived. And ripples

disturb the tea. Uncut,
the grass outside the parlor

silvers with rain. Daffodils
smear the dark

of the hedge that now,
in the afternoon, darkens.

Why have these children
come? They have not pressed

me down through the nine-month
labor. I have not loved them.

Their father slides by me,
grazing the hem of my skirt.

While the tea smokes
in the saucer, let him kneel

and rub the ache from my hands.
All day my pen has scratched against

some emptiness, and I have rubbed
the edge of this scar

until it pleasures me. When you
return, dear Sister, burn this.

Elizabeth McLagan

PARADISE WITH FLY ELECTRICITY

Possibly some big time
ex-mammal karma'd
into a fly's flick

of a life, or an ordinary
joe or jane
either way, weeks later

I hear a buzzing
and wonder why a song
a little song

of pure desire
could drive me to send
the fly ahead to paradise.

Once or twice have I been
close? in some flowery,
buggy wilderness

or the triangular white
on white kaleidoscope
of a fever dream,

where I held some abstraction
I cannot recall
in the palm of my hand?

Back from the star-sharp
night, I think of that fly,
how it paused at the brink

where the light stilled,
astonished to discover how hard,
how easy to break through.

Jesse Ford

ROADNET

A tangle of arteries
and second thoughts

Once poured
Ever present

A change of heart
A change of plan
A change of economic focus

Sigh, arterial
sclerosis, you know

Possibly fatal
but so much fun
they say
to make

Melanie Green

IN MARIN COUNTY

Sabine and I have the same chronic illness. She's so thin now she wears quilted slacks, a sweater, green wool scarf around her neck. It's late June. Talking takes energy. Mostly, we are silent. We are silent as we eat dinner with the patio door open – listening to the creek and the reedy notes of the mourning dove.

I think what I crave in rich conversations with friends is what I feel with Sabine when we're silent... the mourning dove, the robin landing on the deck, the poppy in the garden.

red poppy
the day before
it blooms

FIVE FLIGHTS UP

Still dark.
The unknown bird sits on his usual branch.
The little dog next door barks in his sleep
inquiringly, just once.
Perhaps in his sleep, too, the bird inquires
once or twice, quavering.
Questions — if that is what they are —
answered directly, simply,
by day itself.

Enormous morning, ponderous, meticulous;
gray light streaking each bare branch,
each single twig, alone one side,
making another tree, of glassy veins...
The bird still sits there. Now he seems to yawn.

The little black dog runs in his yard.
His owner's voice arises, stern,
"You ought to be ashamed!"
What has he done?
He bounces cheerfully up and down
he rushes in circles in the fallen leaves.

Obviously, he has no sense of shame.
He and the bird know everything is answered,
all taken care of,
no need to ask again.
— Yesterday brought to today so lightly!
(A yesterday I find almost impossible to lift.)

Dog, Bird, Tree (and Once Upon a Time, Fish)

"Five Flights Up" appears as the last poem in Elizabeth Bishop's *Geography III* (1976), the last collection of her poems published before her death in 1979. The first time I read that poem, I skipped over the title and looked at it as another dawn poem. Fifteen years before that, a teacher had introduced me to Bishop through "The Fish," which, though he liked, he called a "long, prosy poem." Not only is it not prosy; it is the only poem I have read in forty years that uses the word "isinglass." I thank him now for rousing my graduate student cussedness then and helping me find the way she sees details and creates music and order. About 1980, when I first read "Five Flights Up," I needed to remind myself that everything in a Bishop poem belongs where it is.

The title "Five Flights Up" creates distance and a visual angle that locate the observer considerably above ground level. The two-pulse fragmentary first line, "still dark," shapes the scene and invites me to anticipate and follow the lines of the poem. It isn't like the beginning of a sonnet, "When I do count the clock that tells the time," tick-tocking its way through iambic pentameter to the end of the line. Those two accented pulses make me wait for more to be revealed, and the phrase itself lets me know that the observer in the poem is awake, an insomniac perhaps, or someone just roused from sleep.

An unseen dog and an "unknown bird" break the stillness and blank darkness of the first line, but in a qualified turn: the dog barks "inquiringly" and the bird asks, "quavering." A great word, it sounds like what it says, connotes uncertainty and fear, denotes a little trill in vocal or instrumental music, and names an eighth note in archaic musical vocabulary — all this significance packed and layered in the word "quavering," a characteristically graceful move from Bishop. "Just once" underlines the uncertainty in the dog's asking, and "quavering" does the same for the bird; and yet it varies the question, "once or twice," or perhaps asks a different one, or one with a differing uncertainty. After all, the bird is above ground level. Could they be wanting the end of night?

After all, it is "still dark." We don't know; we only know that, by arriving, "day" gives the answer.

Now that light opens up the expansive morning, Bishop's language releases the strangeness in an ordinary object, a tree. The light and tree act together, with light "streaking each bare branch,/each single twig," on one whole side, creating another tree, "of glassy veins." It's delicate, beautiful and a bit eerie, this glassy veined tree, one tree glistening and transparent, the adjacent one shadowy, and both standing together in the morning. With distance and proximity, Bishop creates this chiaroscuro morning sketch, with only a few images and lines. The morning light gives the large, distant perspective, and the focusing of light on the tree brings us close to its life. The tree unites light and shadow in the same image.

The dog, now seen as little and black, runs in the yard, and the bird "still sits," but no longer in the dark: "Now he seems to yawn." That small yawn opens further the "enormous morning" that Bishop has been creating with carefully paced gestures, observed from five flights up. The dog's unseen owner rebukes him in a stern voice: "You ought to be ashamed!" And the observer, as if to retort, interjects for the dog, "What has he done?" The dog offers his own shameless answer: "he bounces cheerfully up and down;/he rushes in circles in the fallen leaves." The dog is too excited by what William Stafford calls the "dizzying now-ness of experience" to attend to his owner. Besides, unlike his owner, "he and the bird know everything is answered." The owner isn't outside in the morning light, and the dog isn't about to be "owned." The dog and bird "know" enough not to keep asking about the end of night once day has arrived. They simply live in the "enormous," "ponderous, meticulous" morning.

The observer exclaims "Yesterday brought to today so lightly!" for the creatures, a line of surprise and perhaps a touch of envy. Yet the metric lightness of the line, with its unaccented syllables and anapestic feel, underplays any dark side. The last line, though, looking back at "lightly," moves forward to bear both syllabic and metric weight. It's the longest line in the poem, and it contains the largest number of accented syllables. This long line, combined with its shift to the fragmentary and the parenthetical, embodies the explosive, desperate whisper from the

observer, the "I," which enters the poem for the first time in the last line.

The observer wants the complete lives that the dog and bird seem to have, including their knowledge and their acceptance of the day, just as it is. Even though both creatures have inquired about the end of night or the coming of day, day itself was all either one needed for an answer. But for the observer today is near the end of autumn, a season of bare branches, twigs, and piles of leaves, a season with ominous overtones. Where has summer gone? And "Where are the songs of Spring? Aye, where are they?" The autumn dawn may have left satisfied those creatures with no sense of history and who knows how much consciousness, but it has created a more complex and disturbing inquiry for the observer.

Through her amazing smoothness and ease with language, Bishop has moved the poem towards the observer's question about the "lostness" of the past, that "yesterday I find almost impossible to lift." Is the key word "almost"?

Jean Esteve

BIRTHDAY PRESENTS

Thanks for the bouquet.
Daisies, orchids, bougainvillea, see
they're in a vase
– it's in a vase –
sitting over there,
dying now, separately but together,

just when I needed their evocative image
to wear on my mud-yellow jacket. Oh, well,
time tells, and we're getting no younger,
my dearie and me, though our hearts are
– you know, old. My heart is old.

Don't think I've not put in my time doing dishes.
Out here, if you haven't washed restaurant dishes,
picked crabs, clipped ferns, at least for a season,
you can't show your face and they won't let you vote.

In mud-yellow coats
they walk their beach, the retirees.
Everyone agrees it's their beach, they've laid claim
with pigeon-toed sneakers-prints, never bare feet.

They can't pass a kelp but they must pick it up,
drag it along the tideline awhile
by its tail and then leave it stretched at the end
of a long track.

Children, at heart, old as children,
with mile-high piles of shiny dishes behind them.

I've invited them all to come as a bloc
to my birthday party, my block party tonight.
I've secured a lutist and a flutist and a tubaist,
so we'll dance by the light of the big shopping mall.

Don't you wonder why, when we're all together dancing
and talking with each other, we seem to disappear?

You see, I've received other presents as well.
One published author sent me his book
where he uses the referent "she" after
anyone. Ain't that a pat on the head.

I have to tell you something. There won't be a party
as planned because no one would come.
After dark, both the mall and the beach empty
as folks drift inside to watch their tvs.

I'm not whining. Why do you think so?
this whole show's been given to me free.
No entrance fee, Mama paid that,
and sometimes we chatted, during the ads.

But if five hundred million
tvs don't appease us,
what are we hankering so loudly for?
Oh, nothing, except – do you think you could spare it?

I mean, what would be cool would be a real war.

Thank you. Your beneficence exceeds the powers
of my pen, a prism spilling its colors. Thank you, thank you,
double exhalation marks. And thank you
once again for the flowers.

Jane Esteve

MIDNIGHT

Red flashes momentarily across my sinless bedroom walls,
and then the ambulance goes screaming out the River Valley road.
A green afterlight gels the deep idea behind my eyes,
but nothing else inside me feels aroused.
Somebody else.
Let him weep.

Like I say every day, it seems, I can't be everywhere at once,
and miseries like memories become what you make of them.
Once when the strobes and sirens swept the steps of my front
porch,
the lead weight in my stomach bent me double –
why I'm able
now to sleep.

Steve LaMontagne

WAR STORIES

The kids in my neighborhood
would meet in a vacant lot
under the high voltage wires
at the end of the block.
Armed with plastic Tommy guns
and tin Colt 45s, lever action Winchesters
and battery powered laser blasters,
we could smoke a roll of caps rapid fire
and brag about how we could take it.

David showed us the deep purple welts
thick as Lincoln Logs
crossing his butt and upper thighs.
Ricky's dad punched his arm
black with a knot of white in the center.
Dolores' used the buckle-end of his belt,
Mark and Pauly's mom
the doubled-up detachable cord
from an electric percolator.

I could stand silent.
My dad had held me at arm's length
and whipped me in the street,
right in the middle of a game
of "devil-in-the-ditch."

David Johnson

STATESIDE SURVIVOR

Of all my secrets,
this one is close to my longest held:
I was a reserve not a regular
in the military,
got by with two not four years
of active duty in Uncle Sam's Canoe Club.
None of the lifers & regs knew it; they thought
I was one of them but I fooled
those hardass sailors consigned to grey lives
of bunkbeds, lockers and Rolling Rock
with my cunning, my blurred dossier, my crisp dungarees.

Here's the truth:
I marched in an abbreviated boot camp for two weeks,
swabbed decks on a tin can for three weeks,
skated on 'Nam,
came home from the stateside wars,
got my young ass out
of Pentagon hock.

As the years turned,
I gave it less thought, fewer nightmares
of being still in the service
& then one day in Coos Bay, Oregon
I visited the touring half-sized Wall and found
20 E 089 James Cartwright,
a smart-alec punk who rolled Luckies
in his black t-shirt sleeve,
skipped school to suck down Olys
in his chopped and channelled '50 Merc
& 38 E 072 Edward Stuart,
a sweet lad down the highway
who shared my crush on freckle-faced Jennie Aiken,
was a cub scout with me in my mother's den,
who had loving sisters
who didn't understand his death or the others
& 30 years later
neither do I.
Not a one.

Jay Nebel

HONESTY

Sometimes when I walk down these old streets
I think of what the trees looked like, who I was,
how the leaves cast shadows on everything;
me and my girlfriend rising against the season
drinking from one another's throat;
But this tells you nothing

about my life, about how I beat my girlfriend
one day in our backyard while it snowed,
and the leaves came down
and stuck against the drifts
in front of us.
I could hear my neighbor playing a cut on his piano

and it split my guts in half. And hers
even though she was silent.
But I went to work, as usual,
the next day; after
I'd rolled away from her
that morning, out of bed,

leaving her there. But this tells you
nothing, and the silence that had never existed
pressed against us: and this means nothing.

Nothing about how I wake with her above me
her knuckles aimed downward, at my throat.
You can smell her rage and I am on my knees;
and you know for sure, for goddam
sure, it is the honesty that got us
here. But she can't do it.
Some people just can't.

Casey Bush

SUFFERING

SUFFERING INWARDLY.

inhaling deeply head is sucked into chest disappearing between
shoulder blades leaving a fleshy crater that could be mistaken for a
Presidential mandate or an act of Congress. an exclamation point
rises from that hole lifeless and condescending stale stench
discovered by lifting the carpet in a moldy room.

SUFFERING STUPIDLY.

driven back to the ranch by big city unemployment I pound my
forehead with a wooden mallet until eyes are crossed and blood
drips from tongue onto bib overalls. tomorrow I will file a claim for
workman's compensation, this afternoon I will fabricate the
circumstances of my on-the-job injury.

SUFFERING WITHOUT CONVICTION.

a mattress on the floor water stained yellow holds my dreams; one
hand behind head, the other grasps a cigarette above chest, ash
sprinkled like salt across moth eaten sweater contemplating paint
peeling off the ceiling. I imagine a life of genetic mutation
wearing customized blue jeans that allow for a third pant leg double
crossing lower extremities.

SUFFERING DOWNWARDLY.

I score a hole in one on the desert golf course and must conform to
the religious customs of my hosts. willingly I shed clothing and
dive head first after the ball becoming embedded in the sand,
ostrich style wildly waving legs in the air. the omnipresent Solar
Body cannot bear such a sight and draws a cloud over the country
club to obscure its view of my cultural humiliation.

SUFFERING OVER THE HORIZON.

I fall off the edge of the Earth as though caught beneath a stage
backdrop, arms flailing, helplessly drowning in a rip tide witnessed
alone by celestial entities hung from the ceiling of a sound
studio. memory is as short as my shadow.

Michael Spring

THE GUITARIST

for John Christian re: Vai

takes hold of a note
the length of his arm

and pulls it out
from his wrist –

both ends severed –
a fleshy straw –

he puts one end
into his mouth to see

how long he can
breathe like this –

he'd like to think
that every note

in every song he plays
comes this easy –

this close
to who he is

Linda Goertz

VILLANELLE: BARREN

*There once lived a king and queen who were rich and
had everything they desired except children. The queen
lamented day and night because of this, saying, 'I'm like
a field on which nothing grows.'*

– Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm, "The Donkey"

She's like a field where nothing grows,
where no-one comes to bind and bless.
The fire dims, the east wind blows.

With hidden hollow still she goes,
wandering like a wilderness.
She's like a field where nothing grows.

Her locked and hidden paths enclose
a silence we can only guess;
the fire dims, the east wind blows.

The pale imagined names she chose
now walk in limbo, motherless.
She's like a field where nothing grows.

Drab winter falls, and still the snows
drift through her heart with wild excess;
the fire dims, the east wind blows.

Within the ice there lies a rose
whose empty heart remembers *yes*.
She's like a field where nothing grows;
the fire dims, the east wind blows.

WHAT FATHER LEFT

Life is
less like
the needle-narrow path
along the Cliffs of Maher
too high for sea sounds
where birds whirl
across airy maps
and mist clouds
touch my forehead
with failed attempts
at rain
than it is
the blackberry whips
holding out
sweet, dark fruit
at the far end
of the open field
my father ploughed
and left for me
to reach.

Double Memory, by Steven Babcock
(26 Books, 1999)

Steven Babcock is a poet with *lagniappe* – which is Cajun for something extra, as when the butcher throws in a couple of eggs with the lambchops you just bought. A gratuity, not entirely germane to what you sought when you walked in the shop, but why not? Good poets are always throwing in something extra, unpredictable; it's what distinguishes them from wretches of mere correctness.

A true poet – such as Babcock – can't just extol the virtues of the work ethic; he must compose a mock-heroic ballad about operating a Caterpillar 627B, including the niceties of steering manipulation. Must he explain why you should check the gas cap on a chainsaw before you start walking? Of course he must. He's a grown-up version of the kid who put together little stick-and-leather fetishes to guard the little plants he grew in the egg cartons. As befits a Louisianan (by birth) or an Oregonian (by adoption), everything is overgrown, overdrawn. One of the sweetest love poems I've ever run across expresses itself in geologic terminology. Poetic technique is explained by a guide to plumbing installation. By a trick of amphibian semirealism, a flooding town transforms into a dead march in "Nocturne":

*A funeral procession
of furniture
washed up by fog
and deposited in alleys
and vacant lots.*

*A worn out chair –
its cushions
sour and torn
drifts around town
and snags on corners.*

A broken light fixture
hangs from a tree
and
a three legged table
squats in the ditch
like some pitifully afflicted creature.

The streets are slick
and greasy.
The outline of shops
and houses
is veiled
in a film of mist
and strangely shaped antiques
pass
wrapped in winding sheets.

What workshop can do much with a guy who sits in a crummy* during an Umpqua downpour, dreaming of mothballs and eclipses, and then insists on putting it all in the same poem? The result is hardly equilateral, but manages to encompass not only these, but all kinds of other oddments, sneaking in somewhere a piquant observation on the human condition or the nature of the universe: *The mathematics of disaster/always begins at the end/of the equation and works back*. Babcock has, in his best moments, a trick of doing this by using, rather than metronomic form, a sort of cultivation of chaos, a Black Mountain covered with blackberry brambles, Robert Duncan with a roofing hammer, Reznikoff in the rain. It's riverine, fertile even as it meanders, always unfinished. And he stamps in gumboots, behind Rexroth, Gary Snyder, Sharon Doubiago, Clem Starck – never mind the mud – in the moist tradition of Pacific Northwest poetry.

I suppose it's a sense of growth and the elements that gives Steve Babcock's verse its *lagniappe*. Hydrography is a generous science, I think, pumping my basement after ninety-plus days of rainfall, you never can tell what you'll find growing in the corners. *Who can say what will happen in a world/still only half-created?* Who can say what a reader will find in *Double Memory*?

**crummy*: forestry talk for a tentlike structure, possibly portable on the bed of a truck, for staying out of the rain

EDITORS' NOTES

On the evening of June 15, at 7:30, several poet-contributors to *Fireweed* will be featured in a public reading at Broadway Books, located at 1714 NE Broadway in Portland. We urge all who are able to do so to come and bring their friends to this fine little bookstore for an evening of poetry.

As we begin to think about this year's *Fireweed* picnic, we wonder first about a possible location somewhere in the Willamette Valley. For the past several years, Willamette Park in Corvallis has been our spot. We are interested in hearing nominations for some other venues that might be suitable for a late summer *Fireweed* picnic. Drop us a card or email us if you have an idea in this connection.

CONTRIBUTOR'S NOTES

DIANNE AVERILL's two volumes of poems, *Branches Doubled Over with Fruit* (1991) and *Beautiful Obstacles* (1998) were both finalists for the Oregon Book Award. Her poems have appeared in many journals. She teaches at Clackamas Community College.

CASEY BUSH has published a chapbook, *Blessings of Madness* (1994) and a chess biography, *Grandmaster from Oregon: The Life and Games of Arthur Dake*.

JEAN ESTEVE, Waldport, has published work in many journals, including (besides *Fireweed*) *Rain City Review*, *Seattle Review*, *Greensboro Review*, *South Carolina Review*, and *Xanadu*.

JESSE FORD, Philomath, splits his time between research and teaching at OSU (Fisheries and Wildlife Department), creative writing, and making home and family on three acres in the foothills of Mary's Peak.

LINDA GOERTZ, makes her first journal publication with the villainelle in this issue. She has studied poetry writing with Verlena Orr and Henry Carlile and is also an actor.

CHARLES GOODRICH, Corvallis, reports that he's spending the cash from an Oregon Arts Commission Fellowship on a sabbatical from his Benton County Parks Department job, working on poems and essays. His work will appear in the collection *Millennial Spring: Eight New Oregon Poets*, due this fall from Blue Heron Press.

MELANIE GREEN lives and writes in Northeast Portland.

DAVID JOHNSON is a freelance writer who lives in Portland. His features and reviews have appeared in *Eugene Weekly* and in the Oregon Literature Series volume *Varieties of Hope*.

STEVE LAMONTAGNE, Eugene, describes himself as "a chronic under-achiever whose midlife crisis is manifesting poetically." He has been a logger, tree planter, carpenter, building contractor, and is now studying writing full-time at the University of Oregon.

CARTER MCKENZIE, Dexter, has had work published by the Lane Literary Guild, *Chain*, *Camellia*, and *Poets On*.

ELIZABETH MCLAGAN is a Portland teacher and freelance writer who has recently had poems published or forthcoming from *Calyx*, *Barnabe Mountain Review*, and *Willow Springs*.

JAY NEBEL resides in Portland. This is his first appearance in *Fireweed*.

SHERRON NORLEN, Portland, published her first collection of poems, *Entomologist's Dreambook* (Protean Press, San Francisco) in 1998. Her work has appeared in *Calapooya Collage*, *Hubbub*, *Kestrel*, *Calyx*, and elsewhere. She has work forthcoming in *Playing with a Full Deck*, a new anthology by 26 Books.

HELVY PARTRIDGE spent many years on a working Willamette Valley farm and taught creative writing at Catlin Gabel School. She now writes and resides in Portland.

DAN RAPHAEL, Portland, is well-known in the Oregon poetry community as the publisher of the series 26 Books, many of the authors of which have appeared in the pages of *Fireweed*.

WHITLEY C. REECE has taught literature and writing for forty years, twenty-nine of them at Portland State University. He has also sung with audition choirs, been a caddy, bus boy, sewer worker, carpenter's assistant and member of a television production crew. He didn't know he was readying himself to write poems.

DOUG SPANGLE, Portland poetry impresario, is senior editor of *Rain City Review*. He has translated works of the East German poet Peter Huchel and published his own poems in journals such as *Mudvein*, *Dog River Review*, and *Liberty Hill Poetry Review* as well as *Fireweed*.

MICHAEL SPRING, Corvallis, is a buyer for the Book Bin bookstore. Among other publications, his poems have appeared in *Talus & Scree*, *Poetic Space*, *Poet's Guild*, *Bogg*, and *Haight Ashbury Literary Journal*.

FIREWEED

