

ars poetica 2020

Poulsbohemian Coffeehouse
September 1 – 30,
2020

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Acknowledgements to

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Poulsbohemian Coffeehouse

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Poulsbohemian Coffeehouse Slide Show

Jeffrey Kooker – Manager of the Poulsbohemian
Coffeehouse

as well as monthly art exhibits

Marianna Mears – owner of the Poulsbohemian Coffeehouse
supporting poetry, art, & great coffee for over 25 years!

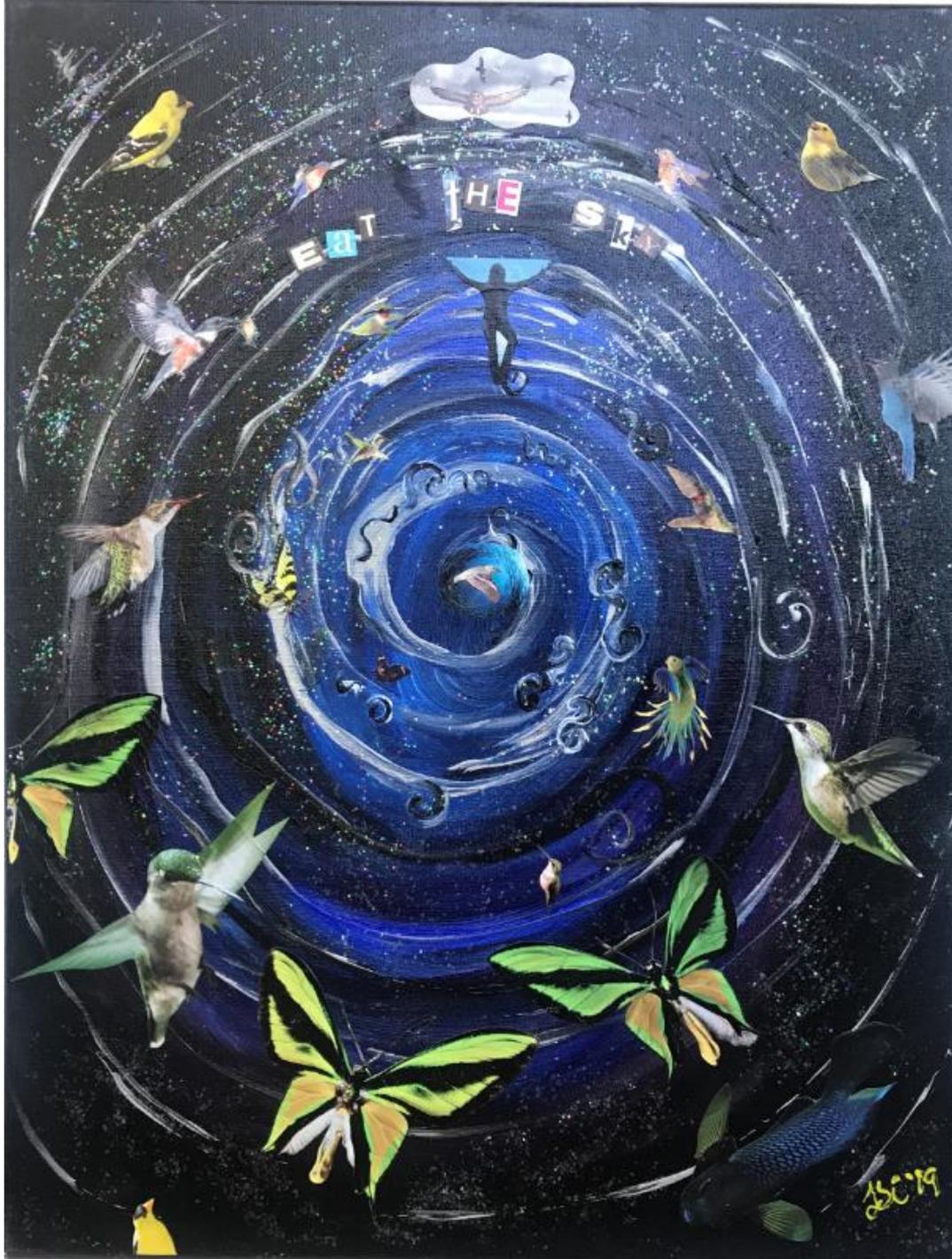
“Eat the Sky”

Artist: Jennifer
Chamberlin

Inspired by poem

“O-juzu”

Poet: Colleen Rain



O-juzu

An acolyte climbed into a tree to throw cherry stones at monks passing below him. When they did not look up, he broke his silence and named aloud all he had seen that day; small boats bringing drowned salmon to the shore, moss blooming into stars reaching for those in the sky, two bucks facing off across the rush of a mountain stream, gibbous moon floating above the cypress gate at the end of the heavenly road. No one answered him. He wept as the eldest among them took up a branch tied at the end with dried grass and with long, careful swish, swish, swish swept the cherry stones into a neat pyramid near the golden Kannon.

*In the priest's
body one cell decides
on immortality.*

by Colleen Rain

Why I chose this poem: Artist Jennifer Chamberlin. *“When I was a child, I was in Hurricane Hugo. I even had to walk the dog during the eye of the storm. The devastation to life and land was overwhelming for me. Afterwards I experienced agoraphobia and panic attacks when I went outside and looked at clouds. I’ve overcome this but still remember the dread I felt at looking into the sky. This piece is a bit of reclamation from the god that was the sky.”*

Media: Collage \$200

What inspired me to write this poem: Poet: Colleen Rain.

“O-juzu is the act of counting beads on an O-neju, a string of Buddhist prayer beads that number 108, for the sins of the world.

We are all the acolytes: in love with the world, consuming beauty, leaving waste.

We are all the monks: mending our actions, creating order, wishing for mercy.

We are all the priest: our body is our only temple and one cell deciding on immortality changes it irrevocably.

This poem was written on the occasion of a friend’s cancer diagnosis, I’m a survivor and he asked me what to expect.”

“Vertigo”

Artist: Jennifer Chamberlin

Inspired by poem

“Protest”

Poet: Rebecca C.
Christensen



Protest

I will walk with the trees
in protest
their uprooted feet spilling poisoned dirt and debris
along with our tears.

We will walk
to a different jungle
one of concrete, chaos, corruption
crossing clogged streams steaming in the rising heat
empty of life.

We will sign the petition
on paper milled from their scarred ancestors' limbs.

We will mingle
with gaunt polar bears,
buzz nose-to-nose with the last bee colony,
pick dead flowers in a desert crunchy with empty seashells
from the spent seas.

I will walk with the trees
in protest
in hopes that someone will hear; that someone will care
before all is no longer there.

by Rebecca C. Christensen

Why I chose this poem: Artist Jennifer Chamberlin. *“This piece was inspired by the feeling you get looking up into the trees and feeling insignificant. This piece reminds me of night hiking. My first spiritual experience was when I was 10 on a car ride watching trees pass me by and realizing that they were oxygen machines for humans and animals and we were carbon dioxide machines for trees.”* Media: Acrylic Price:\$200

“The Salvage Yard”
Artist: Mary Doyle

Inspired by poem
“The Salvage Yard”
Poet: John Delaney

The Salvage Yard

That's where my poems go.
Put out to pasture.
Exposed to the elements.
Left to rust beneath the sky
or destined for scrap metal.

But you never know.
Just the other day
a guy came looking
for a tire rim
for his Volkswagen Variant.
A rare model notchback.
And I had one for him.

by John Delaney

Why I chose this poem: Artist Mary Doyle. *“The poem “The Salvage Yard” reflects an idea that echoes throughout my work: beauty can come from unlikely or unexpected places. I appreciate the line “but you never know” and hope it awakens. What one of us creates may be just what another person needs; though the waiting can leave us discouraged or feeling “left to rust beneath the sky” what we put into the world, great or small, matters.”* Media: Mixed media (using salvaged items) \$525.

What inspired me to write this poem: Poet: John Delaney. *“I went to the Mardi Gras in 1973 in a Volkswagen Variant I had purchased in Denver. I had never seen one before. But I needed a new tire rim and spent a long time on the outskirts of New Orleans in a huge salvage yard. I couldn’t believe that they had what I needed. I feel poems “salvage moments, people, places, things – and are just waiting for the right reader.”*

“How We Glitter Up”

Artist: Melody Sky Eisler

Inspired by poem

“How We Glitter Up”

Poet: Ronda Broatch



HOW WE GLITTER UP

In the upcoming years, or the morning or evening skies
we acquaint ourselves with slow deaths. We are outer
satellites, crazy copper bodies allowed to keep

our gasses. It wasn't our fault, this complex interaction
with the atmosphere, it's how we angle ourselves
above the horizon. This has made conversation

brief; following Io around its orbit, how ocean currents
carry huge amounts of Sun's energy. Jupiter was
so damned hot, but we said nothing. What

is the catastrophe of experience? I could not
match your brightness, your strong magnetic field,
how your fist, held at arm's length, was a full ten degrees

inextinguishable, and flashing
either side of this invisible celestial path.

by Ronda Broatch

Why I chose this poem: Artist Melody Sky Eisler. *“I loved the cosmic significance of the poet’s words. Glitter can imply profound ideas like that we are all made from stardust and it can be trivial and cheap, “not all that glitters is gold. “ By using fancy glitter in my mixed media piece I represented a celestial path of the contradictory nature of glitter.”* Media: Mixed media. \$75

“Snowbound”

Artist: Greg Enright

Inspired by poem

“Snowbound”

Poet: Al Gunby



Snowbound

I'm told it rarely snows here ... just a bit,
and melted in a day, they say,
but wait – a string of storms
within a week is just
(how shall I say)
a bit too much
as trash piles up
(two pickups missed)
and power flickers
(run for candles).
Still, I love the view in white—
just let it melt tonight.

by Al Gunby

Why I chose this poem: Artist Greg Enright. *“Painting Motivation: “The story behind Snowbound came about because for the last 2 winters I have spent my Januarys in Costa Rica for about 4 weeks. I own a small ecological tour business and we usually do our guide training and check out new locations for our tours during my days there. Having grown up in Yakima, I move to the beautiful town of Poulsbo 40 years ago because “I HATE SHOVELING SNOW! “*

So, January 2019, 4 days before my flight down to 80 degrees of sunshine, what does it do. Yes, it snows! Out comes the snow shovel. Why couldn't I leave earlier in the week! Winter of 2020 I came back from a gorgeous 4 weeks of sunshine and what does it do with in 48 hours of returning to Poulsbo? You guessed it! And it was for 3 days. Really! So now as I shovel the snow off my driveway past my garbage cans, I think of it as building sandcastles on a beach somewhere nearer to the equator!” Media: Acrylic. Price: \$100 to a good cause of your choice.

What inspired me to write this poem: Poet: Al Gunby. *“February, 2019, and we had two healthy snowstorms on Hood Canal in 3 days...a total of 10 inches. Lady Hood likes to be dressed in white! Trapped indoors, I got lots of reading done. It was inconvenient, but lovely.”*

“House of Feathers”

Artist: Mariah Finch

Inspired by poem

“House of Feathers”

Poet: Adam Rabinowitz



House of Feathers

The feathers on the house are owl's
silent striated wing feathers
tucked into tile and rough cedar siding
the house is nocturnal
windows wide-eyed unblinking
sentient while others sleep
while full moon also wide-eyed unblinking
sees gathered clouds passing over
the moss on the roof is thick and quiet
bathing in rain and mist and fog
gathered clouds are also quiet

If in a dream
the house were to fly
free from foundation
silent as an owl
slow as moss grows
through gathered clouds
around full moon wide-eyed unblinking
would the house remember the dream
or even the feather

by Adam Rabinowitz

Why I chose this poem: Artist Mariah Finch. *“Enchanted by the poem, I entered into it. Smelling the moss, mist, and moonlight....floating with it all. Gathering feathers. A favorite toy of my little one became the house. As he is always with me that house seems to be too. Media: 8x12 acrylic on wood round, old sweater, cardboard, and feathers. Price \$225*

“King of Tarts”

Artist: Mariah Finch

Inspired by poem

“Reversed Rhymes”

Poet: Cynthia Ruptic

Reversed Rhymes

Miss Muffet, Miss Muffet,
get off your tuffet!
Jill, toss that pail away!

The Woman in the Shoe
figured out what to do
and she hopped on a bus to L.A.

Old Mother Hubbard
locked up her cupboard.
Mistress Contrary smiles today.

Mrs. Pumpkin Eater parted with Peter.
Sally wiped her eyes
and is winsome and wise.

The ladies in the lines
of Mother Goose rhymes
are gone.

So, the King must bake
his own tarts
from now on.

by Cynthia Ruptic

Why I chose this poem: Artist Mariah Finch. *“I love the freedom beloved characters I’ve always known get to experience. Released from the tight grip of Mother Goose’s beak, they are free to be their own! And “the King of must bake his own tarts from now on!” Amen. Hahaha!”*

Media: Acrylic, gold leaf, and paper cards on 20” round wood panel. Price \$375.

What inspired me to write this poem: Poet Cynthia Ruptic. *“I wrote the first version of my poem “Reversed Rhymes” as an assignment for a poetry class with Mary Donahoe at Central Oregon Community College in Bend nearly 40 years ago. Over the years I have revisited and revised the poem until this year when it’s time has come.”*

“Smite Me”

Artist: Michelle Perdue

Inspired by poem

“Smite Me”

Poet: Carol Despeaux

Fawcett



Smite Me

Smite me, O Love, your valentine heart hammering
like a stubborn woodpecker, croon to me, my foot

tapping to yor gypsy jazz and lady blues. Jinx me,
let me choke on chocolate-covered oysters. Command

your winged boy-god to pierce me with his moonlit-dipped
arrow. Rip the bloody muscle from my chest, let it fall

like a rabid rodent before a tribe of terriers. For I am
Passion's whore, stalking the four corners like Aphrodite

luring another lover to his small death. Paint me
with jasmine, make me irresistible, turn me

into siren's song, rhythm and pitch sinking
ships and sailors before they sink me. Sew me

a dress of rose petals and thorns, moonlight and hemlock,
so when you come calling I'll not care if the glass slipper
fits.

by Carol Despeaux Fawcett

What inspired me to write this poem: Poet Carol Despeaux Fawcett.

“For Valentine’s Day I wrote a poem of supplication addressing love directly as if a living being. I wanted to explore both the positive and negative ways love can express itself. Using sense impressions and dynamic metaphors, I hoped to share the dualities of love, and broaden the reader’s experience of the possibilities of love. Plus, I wanted to have fun and play.”

“Here with You”

Artist: Sarah Steffen

Inspired by poem

“Here with You”

Poet: Ronda Broatch



HERE, WITH YOU

How good to be lost with you, soaked in sunset,
two gulls threading the grey air, wood smoke and
tugboat,
swaths of water burdened to a sheen. Maybe time
is merely a construct of our making, but I believe

in hunger, in being fed. In taking a lifetime
watching crimson spill over foothills, dousing
Puget Sound. I wonder what it's like to ripen without
fear, to be a near perfect body. I've heard it said

hot metal dropped in water forms a true sphere, held
in tension's embrace. How nice to know when death
lugs
at my life force, spreads my energy out into

so many billions of stars - such sweet amnesia! -
I will still be here with you, two gulls gathering the
dark,
stitching closer, two tugboats pressing home.

by Ronda Broatch

Art by Sarah Steffen. Not for sale.

“Outside My Window”

Artist: Andrea Tiffany

Inspired by poem

“Outside My Window”

Poet: Cathy Warner



Outside My Window

Outside my window
in early morning fog
eagle finds a salmon
bleached in decay
washed ashore the day before
lays claim with anchored talons
rips flesh with razored beak
until it sees me looking
out from behind glass
too close for its comfort
flaps its mighty wings
flies out of view
holding fast to the fish
I walk to the kitchen
for breakfast
one life feeds another

by Cathy Warner

Why I chose this poem: Artist Andrea Tiffany. *“Birds seem to provide my greatest source of inspiration to paint, followed closely by the local landscape of mountain-framed saltwater. Fish often come popping up to the surface of my artwork, as well. This poem contained all I needed, and though Eagles are not my favorite bird—a bit brutish, for my taste—they are spectacular creatures, and the partnership between Eagles and Salmon is a local classic.”* Media: Watercolor Price: \$200

What inspired me to write this poem: Poet Cathy Warner. *“Two-and-a-half years ago I moved to low bank fixer upper in Union on Anna’s Bay of the Hood Canal. There is always something to see out the window. At low tide, the bay is mud, oyster beds, and the Skokomish River. When the salmon occasionally a dead one washes ashore. This particular morning I stumbled into the living room to find an eagle unusually close to the house feasting on a salmon. I think both of us were startled by our nearness to each other.”*

“The Mist”

Artist: Michelle Van Berkom

Inspired by poem

“Kayaking”

Poet: Barbara Hoonan



Kayaking, July

Soft, soft the sky, veiled in white,
pierced by light.

Opalescent shimmers hide the shore.
Into fog I glide, red prow piercing
mist and blue-grey water.

Cascading droplets sing like bells
as each paddle-edge rises, falls,
rises, falls.

The kingfisher, on his perch, listens.

I am gently moving and at peace,
wrapped in stillness,
held by wonder

by Barbara Hoonan

Why I chose this poem: Artist Michelle Van Berkom. *“I live on Hood Canal and love kayaking on its sheltered waters. This poem transported me with its spare but vivid imagery.”* Media: Watercolor \$800.

What inspired me to write this poem: Poet Barbara Hoonan.
“In all seasons, the I love to explore the waters of Hood Canal. One quiet, summer morning I set off alone and very early, paddling from shore toward the Olympics. Michelle’s luminescent watercolor beautifully evokes the spirit of my adventure, kayaking in thick fog.”

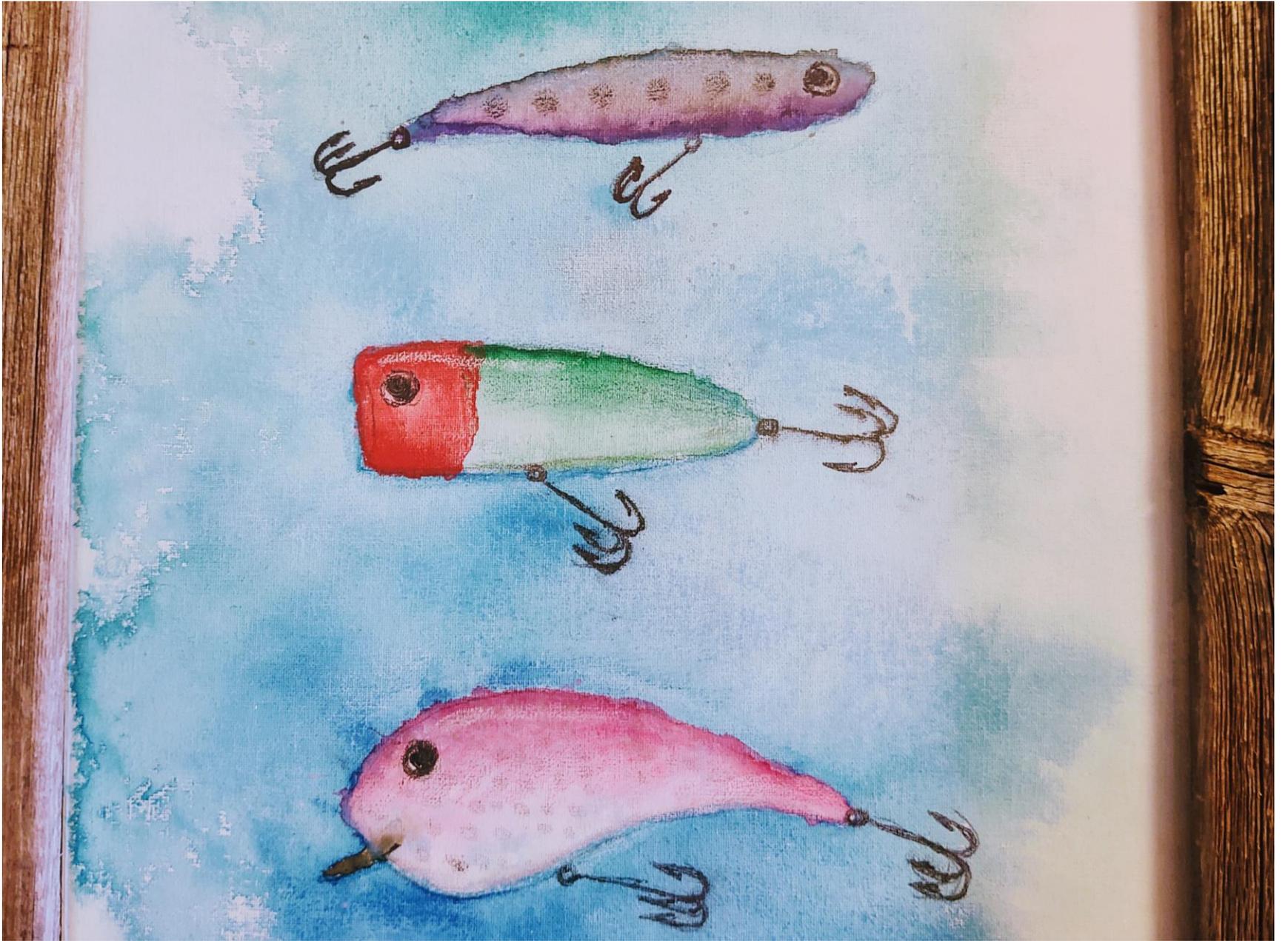
“A-lure-ing”

Artist: James Weaver

Inspired by poem

“Accidental Masterpiece”

Poet: Adelia Ritchie



Accidental Masterpiece

Green arm
with red fingers
swims sideways
through crazy-quilt flotsam--
bright swishes of blue
yellow, turquoise, pink

blue fish glide
through pink yellow
blue seaweed
in crowded tide pools

swoops, drips, stabs
stripes, dots. strokes--
a cacophony of colors
accidental

my watercolor
pigment test strip
a masterpiece
of abstraction

by Adelia Ritchie

Why I chose this poem: Artist James Weaver. *“I was inspired by the poetry and how simple watercolor tools can take on a fanciful vissage as a tropical seascape of multicolor fishes. In a similar tangent, I followed that even utilitarian fishing lures could also share an unexpected beauty.”* Media: Watercolor and colored pencils on canvas.

\$120.00

What inspired me to write this poem: Poet Adelia Ritchie. *“When a painting doesn’t work out, it’s shameful to waste such expensive watercolor paper, so I cut it into strips and use them to test color and saturation before touching my brush to a new painting. When a test strip fills up, it becomes a bookmark! In this case, however, the test strip was so lively and colorful that I had it framed and then wrote this poem about it.”*

“Pedicure”

Artist: Shelly Wilkerson

Inspired by poem

“Pedicure”

Poet: Beverly Hanson



Shelly Wilkerson

Pedicure

It's not out of vanity that I get a monthly pedicure.
It's just the fact that I can't trim my toenails properly.
It's because my tummy gets in the way when I bend over
and I can't see my toes.

However, since the toe lady is already doing my toes,
I figure I might as well dress them up with gold and silver polish.
My toes shine and sparkle.
At Christmas time I have her paint little Santas on them.
They look very cute.

Sadly, the artistic touch is for naught.
No one ever sees them. It is cold here in the winter.
My feet get cold, and I wear thick socks No one ever knows.
I have cute Santas on my toes.

Finally, July arrives, and it is warm.
I don my sandals. My toes show through.
The toe lady paints little flags for the 4th of July.

So then everyone knows
that I have
very cute toes.

Why I chose this poem: Artist Shelley Wilkerson. *“Pedicure fit. I’m all over ladies having fun and getting their tootsies tickled.”* Media: Acrylic on canvas. \$350.00

What inspired me to write this poem: Poet Beverly Hanson. *“My oldest son and I had a monthly date to have our toes done and then lunch afterward. He doesn’t go for any toenail polish but I do. Anyhow I just thought it would be fun to write something about a topic that wouldn’t ordinarily be a poem. Now with the pandemic and my toenails looking like talons, I am beginning to think it is part of our essential needs not just a poem. Good thing it will be colder weather soon and I can put on my socks. I miss the lunch, too.”*

“I borrowed a walking stick”

Artist: Jacqueline Young

Inspired by poem

“I borrowed a walking stick”

Poet: Judy A. Drechsler



I borrowed a walking stick

from the forest
mossy bark, her dress,
the forest didn't mind

Rough bark peels off my stick as
my hand grips it, falls to the ground,
an oval, mottled brown and black rock
will live on my kitchen window sill

I glance at the water plants
their long slender stems and leaves
shuddering gently in
in a stealthy breeze

Three tiny yellow leaves cling
stubbornly to a tree
otherwise winter naked
waiting for spring

Brown ferns crunch under foot
life and death live side by side
I return my walking stick to its forest home
the perfect guest.

by Judy A Drechsler

Why I chose this poem: Artist Jacqueline Young. *“Support and companionship of the walking stick, calming and community of the forest, continuance in the cycle of life.”* Media: Pastel. \$60.

What inspired me to write this poem: Poet Judy A. Drechsler. *“This poem literally wrote itself as I took a walk through the forest during a Yoga retreat on Whidbey Island. It was a very enjoyable and productive poetry writing experience. So many wonderful images presented themselves as I meandered along. It was hard to choose which ones to include.”*

*“Evening Meal, Deep
Autumn”*

Artist: Sue Hylén

Inspired by poem
*“Evening Meal, Deep
Autumn”*

Poet: Liz Kellebrew



Evening Meal, Deep Autumn

I am thankful here,
now
with your body next to mine
hot steak and cool water
red autumn leaves seen through glass
and the sunset in the sky
the warm wood of the table
yellow light of the lamp
salt and sweet on my tongue
the rough skin of your knuckles
in the palm of my hand
gray eyes that might be green
catch fire here,
now
black pupils drawing me into their bottomless depths
I am so thankful

by Liz Kellebrew

Why I chose this poem: Artist Sue Hylan. *“Growing up in New Hampshire, this poem caught my Autumn Eye. Then my camera lens had fun playing with these leaves; two of which take on the ‘dinner dance’ as two lovers enjoying more than their evening meal. A beautiful most sensual poem I feel honored to reflect with this image. .”* Media: Photography. \$40.00

What inspired me to write this poem: Poet Liz Lellebrew. *“Basho wrote a poem called ‘Aki fukashi,’ or ‘deep autumn.’ I borrowed the title and wrote my own poem after my spouse and I had our anniversary dinner. I like poems that engage more than one of the five senses, so I aimed for that here. As autumn approaches once again after several months of pandemic lockdown, I’m even more thankful for the simple pleasure of sharing a meal with my loved ones.?”*

“Little Stream”

Artist: Sue Hylén

Inspired by poem

“Little Stream”

Poet: Dawn Henthorn



Little Stream

Your quiet trickle moves
over soft ground from
a still-water-puddle of a pool.

Gravity pulls you forward, down,
through shale rock steps
tumbling onward,
passing through dark woods
dressed in thick, downy moss
out into grey skies, mist—
then sunshine.

Onward down the hillside
to sharing this stream with
living creatures—
sticklebacks,
dazzling blue dragonflies,
long-legged waterskippers—
until this little stream,
protected and safe in its edges,
dumps out into
dark waters of the lake—
unique no more,
melded with the whole.

by Dawn Henthorn

Why I chose this poem: Artist Sue Hulen. *“I chose **Little Stream** as it literally resonated with resounding stream singing images and sounds. Then this past June my husband and I took a day trip to Crescent Lake where we came upon this stream flowing through the forest, making its journey to the lake. I felt as though this poet had just been here at this stream flowing through the forest, making its journey to the lake. I felt as though this poet had just been here at this stream when she wrote the poem.. .”* Media: Photography. \$40.00

What inspired me to write this poem: Poet Dawn Henthorn. *“Growing up I had many places to play: beaches, tide pools to explore, haystack rocks, hills, and trees to climb, salmon berries to pick. But down by the lake near our house, coming down the hillside and through the forest, was this little stream that was a magical place. The images of this stream come back to me often, and it was time to write about it. My childhood friends and I tramped up it, played along its banks and rested in its moss, scooped up the sticklebacks in our hands and chased the dragonflies. There was so much life in that little stream that flowed into Potatopatch Lake with lily pads, and a beaver dam belonging to Patty the beaver. This place was one of my most favorite places growing up, and is vivid in my memory.”*

*“By a Window Overlooking a
Ravine”*

Artist : Sue Hylan

Inspired by poem

*“By a Window Overlooking a
Ravine”*

Poet: Sheila Bender



By a Window Overlooking a Ravine

I.

An *and*, a *that*, an *adjective*

remove themselves.

A fissure and my poem arrives.

II.

My poems sit in chairs

at my table or nibble my cuffs

like hedge hogs clamoring for peanuts

or chocolate or a week's worth of soup

with carrots and a turnip.

III.

My poems sail in the cold water of Discovery Bay.

They also capsize and drift, come ashore

like logs in a storm, beach themselves

because of the weather.

IV.

By a window overlooking a ravine,

with a view to the snow-covered

mountains, revision is in the air,

A line becomes a title.

by Sheila Bender

Why I chose this poem: Artist Sue Hylan. *“ This photograph was taken off the Mt. Baker Highway in July 2015 on an afternoon the day before my daughter’s wedding. When I read this poem, this photo spoke to me with the rock formation appearing as a contemplative poet sensing her muse as the waterfall’s watercolors spray a rainbow below her.”* Media: Photography. NFS

What inspired me to write this poem: Poet Sheila Bender. *“I spend a lot of time in my studio which has windows that allow me to look out over a ravine behind our house and watch deer as they walk up from the ravine. Another set of windows allows me to look out over my backyard and my neighbors’ to a view of Discovery Bay and Protection Island and Diamond Point. That view enters into much of my writing as does the name Discovery Bay. Protection and Diamond are words with resonance, too. What better to be looking at when you are trying to discover what is at the bottom of your heart and mind than a bay named for discovery? I wrote **By a Window Overlooking a Ravine** in search of what I might write about. It turned out that I recorded what it is like thinking about writing poems.*