

*AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL POETS*

# *JUST POETRY!!!*

*the NATIONAL POETRY QUARTERLY*

Vol. 0, No. 0, June 2009

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**Special Thanks** to everyone else who pitched in and “volunteered”, either willingly or unwillingly.

**Subscription Price:** \$15.00 per year

## *JUST POETRY !!!*

is published four times each school year in Oct., Jan., March, & June.

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## 1999 GRAND PRIZE WINNER

### **,eggs for the other tentacle, solificatio**

a pocket full of volcanic misery and carbonated laughter  
refracted light wandering over the surface of the embryonic universe  
a spherical sigh greets an elastic grimace  
whirlpool of florescence  
anthropoid  
arthrokliploth  
shattered hypersphere of neonatal alphabet  
celestial r..^\/ burrowing through the sun  
shivering extraglucanthar\_\_\_\_seuuuuu  
khza thza chsa a a  
molding a shadow with three hands  
stark clarity disembodies atonal mist  
doldrum minus negative explosion plus smile  
lifting the river to the consciousness canopy, dropping  
libidhammapada and liGHTNING  
inflationary thoughts-->inflateinflateinflateBANG  
.nonlife sound.

*Kyle Edwards, OH, St Ignatius HS*

## 1999 HONORABLE MENTION WINNERS

Mama's gardening glove  
hangs above the old spade  
which bleeds rust  
around its sharp edges

*Stacy Kestenbaum, OH, Sylvania Northview HS*

### Sunset

Perched owls cast away  
falling light of purple dusk,  
welcoming darkness.

*Jessica Wolfley, WI, Shorewood HS*

## 2000 GRAND PRIZE WINNER

Tong Ough (Starved in Chinese)  
*inspired by Edward Hopper's painting "Chop Suey"*

tangerine drab walls  
empty blue pitiful cups on tag-board tables  
thirsting for genuine Chinese herbal tea  
glassy-glazed green-eyed gentries  
sunken in their dull-livered garb  
gazing at each others'  
dumb-dulled expressionless painted faces  
the room reeked of fish  
but nothing was ever cooked  
no fried rice, no beef and broccoli  
especially no chop suey in a Chop Suey restaurant  
the fishy stench sank into the walls,  
seeped into the costumes, the hair,  
the school of scaly skin  
drowning in their shallow conversations  
mannequin eyes yen for abalone shine  
tight-lipped smiles hungry for lemon-gingery snap  
it lacked authenticity, languished for real Chinese soul food  
but the Chinese-white depleted restaurant flourished  
and flooded with colorless dry fish  
*Ayza Camacho, CA, Samuel Morse High School*

## 2000 HONORABLE MENTION WINNER

Geisha's Fan

Painted paper buds  
blood-red blossoms burning bright  
weightless vacant air

Rice paper streaked red  
branches reaching to the end  
whispering willow

Geisha's modest fan  
batting eyes to hide behind  
the painted garden

*Erica L. DePompeo, VA, King William HS*

## *FIRST PLACE WINNER FALL 2001*

itchy silence  
interrupted by my father's  
vain attempt at jokes  
bleary eyes  
try swallowing me  
over half empty  
soda glasses

he hands me a crisp fifty  
worth less  
than my mom's wrinkled, worn five  
in my back pocket

the table between us  
stretches for miles  
*Jessica Wang, NY, Townsend Harris HS*

## *SECOND PLACE WINNER SPRING 2001*

### Sonnet I

Let not life's tides draw thee from lover's shore,  
Though tasks of day and dreams of night do pull;  
But think on treasures that the heart doth store-  
Sweet times remembrance, like the shining jewel.

Oft weighted anchor may have loose a hold,  
Secure once- rigging worn, thy sail unfurled;  
Through boundless sea, o'er waters deep and cold,  
Adrift, life's journey shows to thee the world.

When thundrous voice of tempest thus hath spake,  
And winds of doubtful change do 'round you spin,  
Then beacons of Love's light shall safe thee make-  
And beams shine forth to gently bring you in.

My love, a compass ever unto thee:  
Thy open port for all eternity~  
*Emily Furey, PA, Seton- LaSalle Regional High School*

# *GRAND PRIZE WINNER*

## *SPRING 2001*

### LIFE AFTER

Florence Nightingale breathes through tarry-lungs and potato chip-arteries.  
"It was positive."

Cult member from birth -- conformity with violent-tendencies --  
just a lobotomy, the part cut out, a toddler fleeing TV genocide, until

That moment on my jejune bed, in a jejune apartment, in a jejune nowhere,  
I didn't really know that ruin could actually happen.  
He held me under water and quivered behind my bent back.  
Plath's bell jar laved me while I reckoned the tiled ceiling through a looking-glass wave.  
I wanted death almost as much as I needed it.

His face downswings beneath my feet in my dreams as my dreams become realities.  
Affix tobacco-stained hands over his lolling face before the hands are fists  
and the face crunches.

Do you remember this?

His hyoid smashed upwards, looks now like a gravestone.

I remember this night with perfect clarity,  
and my scabs stretched too tightly over a bloody socket.

18.8 million have died from AIDS.  
33 million live with HIV.  
We call it being positive.  
We are only as significant as we are underestimated.  
*Max Siegel, AZ, Skyline High School*

## *GRAND PRIZE WINNER 2002-2003*

At Sundown

His bare feet gently slap the wooden floor as he slips into their family room.  
Having just returned from the mosque, he takes the leather Koran  
from under his arm and reverently spills it open to a favored passage.  
Feeling the soft paper, he smiles as his eyes take in  
the burning sunset. She will enjoy this verse.

She conducts the orchestra of dinner, each pot bubbling  
the harmony of a kosher fugue. While humming to herself a long-forgotten praise  
of Adonai, she sees the setting sun imbue the small golden menuzah on the left wall  
with a burnished glint. Remembering that he gave it to her for their first  
anniversary, fierce love swells in her heart for this man.

The meal prepared, they walk outside and sit on the back step of their adobe home.  
The sun surrenders trails of yellow, scarlet, and burnt orange fire.  
Casting eyes at the miracle before them, the sun whispers of peace to  
interwoven olive and cream hands.

Whispers of a peace that has existed, it seems, for centuries.

*Preston Copeland, MD, Carver Center for the Arts and Technology*

## *SECOND PLACE WINNER 2002-2003*

Snow White Escapes

The dark-haired damsel, lost in the forest,  
Pursues paths that are endless roads.  
Her red-glazed lips glisten in shafts of sunlight,  
Just kissed by his cruel, violent lips,  
Blood-red gates to his soul.  
Her boots crush new crops  
Of green, three-fingered poison ivy.  
She'd use it to smear on his skin  
Till it itched and burned.  
She stops and plucks deadly nightshade  
And fingers it frantically.  
She'd like to force-feed it to him.  
Now she gathers speed -- and resolve,  
Rushing towards the unknown.  
Better this dark, June forest  
Than some dumb, too-pretty prince,  
Or seven stupid dwarves  
To clean and cook for all day.

*Jenny Lockerby, NJ, Moorestown Friends School*

# *EASTERDAY POETRY AWARD WINNER 2003-2004*

## Eulogy of Dreams

We walked on the edge of an empty field, malicious life flowing through dreams' torrid memory. The sky was dull red, the color of dried blood. I ran my hand along a broken paintless fence, afraid or unsure of your eyes. We passed a small bird struggling against shattered wings to fly; you said it was like me and dismissed it with a glance. I reached for your hand, and our footsteps faded with the tears of flowers.

Across a dark whispering river we saw the gray sun, bleeding into a pale distant sea like melting snow. I lowered my head and watched dead shoots pass beneath me, wondering if they had seen the stars fall. The strangled breeze carried the soft fingers of dandelions, and they clawed at my legs like a terrified child. We paused and you looked at me, expressionless, as my shadow grew wings.

I heard the solitary voice of the Nightshade, and found you in my arms. You were colder than the bleeding sky as you wept into my chest. I said, "Starlight is only the breath of dreams," and the dim sun surrendered to a sightless night.

We shared a desperate, lasting kiss as we felt the world disintegrate. I held your shaking form to me while the rusty field fell around us into the sepulcher of galaxies like rain.

There we remained, above the pit, encircled by wings.

I asked if you remembered the night we burned, and you kissed my tears.

I was truly happy when you said

Always.

*Sarah Vitone, CA, Chatsworth High*

# *SECOND PLACE WINNER 2003-2004*

## **A Smooth Tomorrow**

**If tomorrow the sea went smooth,**  
may I hold one more shell up to my ear  
and hear one final soothing rumble.  
If tomorrow the sea went smooth,  
may I grasp one last hand of coarse, warm sand;  
it will never feel the same again.  
If tomorrow the sea went smooth,  
may I finally find the perfect pebble  
and throw it back to the dying sea.  
If tomorrow the sea went smooth,  
may I run my fingers over one more piece of driftwood;  
tomorrow it will be a rarity.  
If tomorrow the sea went smooth,  
may I forget all of the yesterdays,  
for tomorrow our ways will come to an end.  
  
If tomorrow the sea went smooth,  
  
may I be there to watch the last wave  
  
fight its way to the shore,  
  
then both our hearts shall stop,  
  
and all will be s m o o t h.

*Carol A. Daviscourt, OR, South Medford High School*



*EASTERDAY POETRY AWARD WINNER  
SUMMER 2004*

In The Garden

With disdain he watched her through his bedroom window  
as she worked in the overgrown garden.  
With a pick axe, she persistently attempted to penetrate the petrified red clay soil.  
Beads of perspiration upon her brow glistened in the early fall sunlight  
as sweat leached through her dingy denim work shirt.  
Her need to cultivate something was overwhelming.  
Thoughts of their last encounter sprouted memories of better times as she toiled.  
“You’re not going”... were her last spoken words.  
Dejected and frustrated she abruptly ended their quarrel.  
Angrily he turned and hastily climbed the stairway leading to his bedroom.  
Solace was found in his juvenile belief that she never understood him.  
Each rhythmic blow of the pick brought him contemptible satisfaction  
as the unyielding earth would not open for her.  
Bored at relishing in her failure to break ground,  
he allowed himself to reflect on happier times.  
Memories of them planting that garden intoxicated his mind  
and moved him to stagger down the stairs and exit the house to the garden.  
As she labored, his presence was felt behind her.  
No words that could be heard were said as he gently removed the pick from her blistered  
hands  
and began to chop away at the hardened ground that separated them.  
*Austin M. Watson, GA, Sprayberry High School*

*EASTERDAY POETRY AWARD WINNER*  
*2004-2005*

The Dictators  
after Pablo Neruda

A granite fountain stands in the center of an open plaza,  
paved with gold. The trickling of water fills the empty  
square and floats to carved stone steps, to heavy iron doors.  
Shadows fall from razor peaks darkening the grand palace.  
Splashing water journeys up blue tiled walls, above  
the flag pole. The banner sings to the fountain,  
telling of the suffering of its people.

Eight boys shot for daring to laugh; fathers executed  
in the soccer stadium; children jailed, children burned.  
Mist swallows their stories as it ascends, rising  
past snowy mountains that gouge the sky, rising  
to a cool sun. Beyond even cloud, where sky  
fades from blue to black, mist whispers to the night,

wind listens and hardens into a fist, rolling and spinning,  
crashing down upon the land in a torrent of rain. Streams churn  
to brown rivers, swell, rampaging across the barren desert.  
Dams burst, concrete and steel ruptured, flung into oily water  
like copper casings from a machine gun. This spreading fury  
engulfs the land, parting only for mud homes, toppling the city.  
*Steven Fredericks, MT, Big Sky High School*

## *SECOND PLACE WINNER 2004-2005*

*In which we walk*

Curry burns the back of my nose as my feet brush Nicollet pavement. I look to the right and see an old man climbing an ear of corn, but it is only a poster. I remember us in the grasp of this man on kernels.

Glass is winking high around me. Mangoes and sticky rice swirl inside my belly, pressing against my naval. And all at once there are your kisses, laced with metal and a veil of flesh, pressing too close for comfort. I look up to see if you are waving from the top a skyscraper,

But only a goose,  
frothing from his beak, passes overhead.

My pants feel heavy and it is a moment before I realize there is bamboo and coconut milk in the cuffs of my jeans. Through the cracks in the buildings

I see cars blurring by, their constant vibration crawls into the hum of every molecule.

A woman by the side of the road pushes back her thinning hair before offering dill and tomatoes through her teeth.

I am still walking, passing Hennepin on my left, the road Cloud Man built as the congealing of his desperation pushed snow into his lungs. I see you in the corner of my eye, but before I can catch you in my eyelashes I am distracted.

Distracted by the goose shrieking in the air, his frothing saliva burning holes into the sidewalk as a heart falls from my forehead

*Danielle Miller, MN, PCAE Arts High School*

## *SECOND PLACE WINNER 2004-2005*

### Coordination

Lips tremble, the night beats, the jungle breathes.  
Allow me to journey into the night of your arms,  
in the moisture of your eyes cast a boat and listen to the tale of a pearl.  
Allow me to suspend time in the tangles of your hair.

The wind shatters into a thousand mirrors as it searches your face. A distant pennyroyal  
cries.

The fountain of your lips turns time into dust.

The sun ceases to bleed.

Darkness comes like the breaking of a leaf, like the smell of the sea.

You look at the jungle's roof, starlight runs through our veins.

The string of mystery trembles when you smile.

You feel closer to me than moisture to grass, than warmth to a bird's nest.

You ask me how long it takes for grapes to mature. I have no answer.

The brook is near.

Let's take off our shoes.

Let's understand the dimensions of sand.

Let's place heaven between the two syllables of water,

And allow the fragrance of solitude to dwell under the bush.

The jungle ceases to breathe.

A twig breaks beneath us and the juices of herbs flow toward eternity.

*Sepehr Rejai, CA, Rodriguz High School*

*FIRST PLACE WINNER  
SPRING – SUMMER 2005*

Morning

You smiled a laugh and bit back the giggles spilling like secrets  
from each side of your mouth  
handing back the wicker basket trimmed in bright plaid  
you whispered *it's a surprise* and only winked a quick wink.  
and even when you bent down and twirled me around,  
citrus skirt swinging like forties jazz and the tips of my heels clattering  
down the pavement like carousel horses and when even blind men  
could see the red rose prints in lipstick that trailed all down your cheek,  
you only grinned, and chuckled, *e' una sorpresa, carina,*  
and waltzed me down the cobblestones, the sway of the picnic basket a beat behind,  
and so we skipped and hop scotched and flirted with salacious tango  
down the streets all slicked with lost raindrops.  
and this until you sealed each eyelid with a kiss and shut my mouth with the taste of  
stale coffee and dark bitter chocolate, and slipped a *Look!* into my ear.  
under a dripping tree lay the city, that grand old dame,  
but you nodded away from the arches and columns, up through the leaves, and said,  
*imagine that, victorious again against shooting stars and the eternal city, cara – but  
make a wish make a wish before the sky falls down and we wake up, this must be a dream*  
and when the sunshine knocked politely on the pillow I grinned  
and lapped up the taste of stale coffee and bitter chocolate.  
*Judith Barr, MD, Holton-Arms School*

*SECOND PLACE WINNER  
SPRING – SUMMER 2005*

The Risen Day Settles

The luminous star enclosed the world in a veil of beauty  
Semi-translucent, like running water dripping between fingertips  
Into the rock-strewn bottom of a clear running stream  
The aesthetic image twisted and aslant as departing wind  
Sent with an empyrean message and he, zealous to perceive it  
Shadows of ghostly forms collected at the edges of the windowpane  
Sinking into mirth and rising into light, mournful deaths with joyous life  
Continuously drawing strength from the eternal source  
Perpetually, a windmill grasping existence from a cursive river  
With its bent and crooked fingers, churning endlessly  
Gathering bits of woven air and holding it in an embrace  
His hands rested upon the windowsill, dust coated paned glass  
The paint having cracked and fallen away with burdening age  
The walls of the house sighing in seniority  
All staring at the ruinous asphalt with its weather-worn trees  
Lightning strings dancing amid tangled sinewy branches  
Resplendent sage dressed leaves adorning  
Paltry arteries and veins along each sustaining torso  
With the calm ease of one contented in passing sleep  
As the pleading sun falls by the hand of encroaching night  
*Rachel Pong, NJ, Clifton High School*

*SECOND PLACE WINNER  
SPRING – SUMMER 2005*

Rapunzel

Speak to me in a language I can savor,  
Ride the waves of pleasure until we can rest no more  
On the cliffs of emerald,  
Washed with shiny diamonds  
As the nymphs could no longer sing their praises  
Savor the un-enchanted glory  
And pain infused with absinthe  
Buttressed by the filaments and filibusters  
Frantically seeking a mirage on the moon  
Feel the truth,  
Bite into it,  
Crave the sweetened fruits that basked before your birth  
The sun never knew the light,  
Children frighten away their innocence.  
He laughed,  
The truth we poured out  
Of the chicory flasks blessed by Shamans and shakers  
Weaving flaxes of organza and orgiastic wonder  
The graceful swans of forever highlighting in  
Their Grimm tales what cannot be.  
*Ariela Silberstein, NY, Hunter College HS*

*EASTERDAY POETRY AWARD WINNER*  
*2005 - 2006*

I'm Explaining Our Life

You have asked me: where have the skies stopped producing the mixture of light and spirits?

I'll tell you all the locales.

I lived in a state of mind, full of slumber poppies, with rainbows, and birds, and joy.  
From my heart you could feel Apollo's penetrating heat: an iron love.

Is it that you recall from the great good above  
those August nights when our bodies woke by the dance of the fireflies?  
Friend, now my foe!

And one afternoon your spine was sliced,  
one afternoon the bones of the living dead marched together--  
and from then on we burned separately.

Serpents that serpents would despise; monsters that the monsters would abominate!

Side by side with you I have watched the waves climb and climb into a tsunami  
meant to deafen you from the outside screams of my pain and strife!

Hungry bandits:  
hear my dead body fall, listen for the murder of my friend:  
from every heart poison leaks instead of harmonious love,  
from every pore of my body another being emerges,  
empowering me as I slither round your throat.

And you have asked: why wasn't her life made of frolicking and dance?

Put down your gun! we're already dead.

*Natalie Turturro, FL, Spruce Creek High School*



*SECOND PLACE WINNER  
FALL – WINTER 2005*

Spilled Tea

The sound you made was a yelp of pure jazz.  
A mouth distorted as if a caricature by some sidewalk  
artist; a testament to the art of kneading, or needing.  
It was skin sore with fire, a bite of my  
caustic wit, a tea bag vacillating like a pendulum  
between the juggernaut of thumb and forefinger.  
Tea dripping into a saucer like rain or tears.

Burned by Earl Grey; lemon-sour fingertips to rosy lips;  
love spurns the pain. I told you so, I told you so. The  
profound confounds us, tumbles despotically like a  
teacup, fractured on the floor. Hot liquid dripping  
from the counter like rain or tears. Palms red with  
fragile porcelain, garbed in fictional blue gardenias.  
Smooth lifelines turned to jagged edges or abrupt cliffs,  
flesh plunging into mounds of granulated sugar and glass.  
We cackled at the cracks until they cut us to the core.

Your jazzy yelp closed in my grip, smelling of  
danger and despair, a shaking warmth between my  
forearms. Small consolations dripping from my lips  
onto your earlobe, like rain or tears.  
*Yuliya Benina, PA, Council Rock High School South*

*SECOND PLACE WINNER  
FALL – WINTER 2005*

*to a farm girl*

we were born at the end; yellow ankles, minds--buried in steel  
in mechanized meat, in bank accounts  
no veil as toxic, mother earth it's easy to say this

and gilded streets of lonesome crowded west--ward bound  
what safety valve? what golden country?  
what world and dream to rape when ankles stagnant meet the water?  
what direction, but down?

we woke this morning, and fell a little further  
into generations forth--nothing to claim but hollow chests and empty pockets  
born with inward marble pupils, open us to find no instincts  
slam us shut to abandon: we are backwards scrambling blind

true-artist-seer, do you figure do you wonder why modern hands  
bear no semblance to applause? we know, we know!  
ask us to wrench a bit of world, feel and taste, triple, throw it in the air  
and what do we find except that our hands are dirty

ask us to wrench ourselves from machinery  
in reply we hit the salted sea on knees, beg for mercy, deny a source  
repent for their sins, what instinct  
what applause?

*Ivy Phan, CA, Armijo High School*

*FIRST PLACE WINNER  
SPRING – SUMMER 2006*

Dear World,

If I were a doctor,  
Sapient and bearing,  
A prominence my good name would sustain,  
And within the walls of hospitals, luminous limelight shines where  
So dexterous would I lacerate the harbingers of pain, and still  
Would juxtapose my gallantry with subtlety and unassuming grace;  
With ivory overcoat that sways so cavalier  
As I would stride composed down the corridor that is determinant--  
Life 'round one bend, Death contaminating the other.  
I would capture all the seeming of omnipotence,  
And still so chaste would hone a pewter-bay mien,  
Oh, the pastures I would pace that dress in cool white silkiness,  
And shed warm bastions o'er seas infectious and overgrown.  
If I were a doctor,  
Boundless glory of celestial reach would forever reverberate,  
Greatness through fidelity my soul would sweetly sate. But not so--

For I am but antimatter

Which the good doctor-- unconcerned-- did annihilate

Before I came to be.

*James P. Elliott, NY, Maine-Endwell Senior High*

# *SECOND PLACE WINNER SPRING – SUMMER 2006*

## Instrument Allegiant

Shadows dance with dust throughout the hall,  
Filled with shattered remnants of long strife.  
Arrows, spears and shields line every wall,  
Few remaining whole 'midst wreckage rife.  
I have been a broken sword re-forged.

Tall and pale, a tower stands alone,  
Girded 'round with ruins once as proud.  
Darkness rages loud about the stone,  
Seeking its white pillar to enshroud.  
I have been a watcher at the door.

Rainclouds sweep across a withered moor,  
Battling with the night and shrieking wind.  
Black storms furnish all they can conjure,  
Unchecked in their wrath, undisciplined.  
I have been a fiercely blazing torch.

Sword and watcher, bravely-flaming brand,  
Must accomplish their appointed task:  
Guarding all the strongholds of the land  
'Til the one they watch for comes at last.  
I will be rewarded evermore.

*Helen Primožic, NM, Tyndale Academy of Engaging Scholars*

*SECOND PLACE WINNER  
SPRING – SUMMER 2006*

Silhouettes in Saigon

Impoverished, soiled hands of poverty  
amidst a dust-filled third world country I used to know  
shattered into a scene of oxen sauntering  
through thick rice paddies and stork-like  
silhouettes gracefully hovering ao dai dresses  
above copper-red mud

Regrets faded into Polaroids of cherished moments;  
hardships thawed into a cup of lavender tea  
at my favorite café.

A world played in slow motion,  
slowly identifying pieces of the  
Technicolor mosaic of my life:

the bohemian stepping on the cracks of asphalt sidewalks  
in the metropolitan twilight--drawn to nothing but the  
neon-lit scatter of moving vehicles.

the architect of new ideas on the gently-swaying swing sets—  
plastered in front of a backdrop of rustling autumn leaves.

the shadow of a thinker sitting on an ancient fire escape—  
contemplating the significance of Baroque art and  
waiting for something more out of this kaleidoscopic life  
*Tri Chiem, TX, Langham Creek High School*

*FIRST PLACE WINNER  
FALL - WINTER 2006*

Eternal Decay

Desecrated, stripped, torn bodies standing tall  
Alone, but with each other, ripped from their home  
The smell, that smell, perfumes the room  
Sickly sweet, rotting, and strong  
As though upon this ground, a battle was fought  
And all the dead left for the carrion birds

Most limbs have been hacked or fallen away  
Their faces peeled to roast in the sun  
All the rest taken and crushed with a stone  
If ever they were beautiful, none could tell now

Green, dried, brittle bones staring at a wall  
They came from the fields to die in a jar  
Departing from the land they loved for the joy of few  
Leaving behind and after death, a scent of spring and must  
That hovers with those memories  
Clouding all dreams that pass through their tomb

Stiff books of the warriors open with a sigh  
Released with their own stories are the remains  
Pressed petals that were stolen, fall upon the floor  
Mourning lost stems, that held them up as roses  
*Sarah Stitt, GA, Starr's Mill High School*

## *SECOND PLACE WINNERS*

### *FALL - WINTER 2006*

Season Change, Wounded Heart (a triptych)

MEET—

Mister Sunshine fell upon my brow in the form of refreshing laughter.  
I doubt I'll ever know how to be such a narcissist as he, for he wanders about the looking glass—  
And yet his light only recoils from the mirror to strike him in the pupils.  
He turns away and looks to me, his broken iris shedding starlight onto my shoes.  
I flick the glitter off the patent leather and my lips curl towards the apples of my cheeks.  
“Would you like to share with me?” He says.

GREET—

This night is dipped in gold and dripping of class, and we could be ever youthful, together—  
“Could I osculate the words that are dripping from your lips?” I ask.  
“Would you justify them otherwise?” He replies.  
A quarter-moon floats politely above the urban decay, spilling itself into a smoker's filmy smile.  
I am so charmed by the screaming beams of brilliance that I fail to identify the change in climate.  
My stare is tugging hard on the mocking creases of his mouth when it starts to fade.

DECEIT—

Sunshine, he sank down and tugged on my heartstrings as he kissed my lashes—  
My eyelids pulled away from each other to find him missing, the starlight sipped from my shoes.  
The ants crawled away to hibernation and cackled amongst themselves, smirking in my direction.  
Time seems to melt itself away, charring the faces of first dates and swallowing them whole.  
I was so inspired I thought I knew myself, but I only know my mistakes  
Suzanne Exposito, FL, Douglas Anderson School of the Arts

### *FALL - WINTER 2008*

Brazen

It would be brazen of me to announce that  
I have finally and completely reached a decision  
on the color lukewarm chartreuse.

Lukewarm chartreuse reminds me (and probably you)  
of Russia, among other things like Wednesday 2 P.M.  
or even the one time you sat alone, cried, and finally thought  
of pickles— an image which successfully ruined  
the solemnity you had worked so hard to produce.

It's brazen though, really.

*David Martorana, HI, Iolani School*

## *SECOND PLACE WINNERS*

### *2006 - 2007*

If only we knew

My body is the housing  
that facilitates the muscle  
of your desire. The object  
of pining seems but miles away  
in an unattainable refuge.  
But what you dont know is  
that every ounce pumped  
through these arteries  
is a liter of love  
devoted to you.  
May soon we shall confess  
our parallel affection.  
I pray this levee of interim  
collapses to deluge admirers  
with empathy--enabling us  
to embrace one another,  
clinch for eternity.  
Beneath the skies, welkin  
shall let us breathe  
the same breath.

*Kyle Kress, IN, Heritage Hills HS*

The Fruits of War

loading guns with apple bullets automatic,  
biting into decimated unripe flesh.  
swollen plum stains  
spreading on jaws and hips as bones are broken.  
strawberry eyes, dried and burning, gaze  
at orange-slice flames in window boxes and doorframes.  
black cherry bombs burst and discolor the sky,  
shattering and raining knotted stems and pits  
left strewn upon the raspberry-soaked corpses  
living and dead;  
across the blueberry ocean  
mindless masses imagine shiny wax victory.  
*Allyson Galle, MI, Berkley High School*



*EASTERDAY POETRY AWARD WINNER*  
*2006 - 2007*

Late the Hour I Ask For Thee

Reason, beckon I to thee,  
Bequeath this night your sanity.  
Ensnare my wild heart to know  
Order and peace, somehow lo  
To challenge now these flames of fire  
That feast in torrents of desire  
On word, oh thought, to hope, and dream,  
To desecrate this soft serene  
Like flares of icy cold bestow  
A stinging bitterness below.

Only her, pure lips of red,  
An image born of fiery stead,  
Yet 'tis enough, perfection's face,  
To pierce this heart, control, encase.  
Ahh, but time has kept you free  
Not more than human eye can't see.  
And late the hour I ask for thee.  
And late the hour I ask for thee.

*Kevin Smith, NY, Bishop Grimes Jr./Sr. HS*

*SECOND PLACE WINNER SPRING – SUMMER 2008*

Septic of Lost Dreams

There once was life within the septic tank,  
Its firm resolve was matched by none around,  
But through the years, it slowly died and sank.  
It went unnoticed, gone without a sound.

The signs of death fermented in its core.  
Within this soup, sweet dreams were turned to waste.  
Externally it looked just as before,  
But filled with such a foul smelling paste.

It did not realize its futures bleak,  
But let its innards fall to nature's scorn.  
Escape from its grave tomb it did not seek,  
But doom it found, and that which made it mourn.  
And ignorance became its fortitude. Alone at last, lost in its solitude.  
*Storm Shriver, MI, Crawford AuSable HS*

*SECOND PLACE WINNER  
SPRING – SUMMER 2006*

Ice Maiden

In snow up to my waist I watched as he turned to trod home,  
passed with choppy gait beneath the oaks that dwarfed even his frame.  
When the sled he towed disappeared into the wood, and the forest  
swallowed all sound, I too, turned homeward but found  
no reason or wish to continue.

The pasture: a soundless dome of grey sky and grey snow  
that for all my clement spring days spent among these cow paths  
and the peasant hosannas of hawthorn blossoms, memory could claim none of.  
Snow fell, rolled off my shoulders, and then didn't.  
Snow fell, and fell, and I melted into the hillside  
as what washes ashore is swallowed by sand.

Had you not turned back?

Well, then...I don't know  
but tomorrow, Will, if we go, walk me home.  
I fear I believe too strongly that the fitful winds of time should fill  
my few and wayward footprints more quickly than any snowfall,  
and I can't help but give in to the unchanging snows,  
as when talk tires at last of its offices  
and the dark-eyed boy whose charms I swore to transcend asks  
for just one kiss.

*Hannah B. Lincoln, VT, Harwood Union High School*

*SECOND PLACE WINNER  
SPRING – SUMMER 2006*

Forms of Interruption

We met in spacious summerland hotel-park,  
the middle of a fuchsia summer.  
I am in a crowd of droning bees.  
You are clutching the hem of your teeshirt,  
sparrowsonging a passing cat.

You foot the sand between your toes.  
You smile at my hands braced against the fence.  
This moment, as small  
as ten ants in a jar, as wondrous as  
a stone woman holding a clay jar of water—

You palmed cerulean sky as it dripped from  
my hair, on your face the glow of mahogany evening.  
I saw the firelight draw down your eyes to tears.

When you smiled at me, your face lit in verdant leafshadow,  
your eyes green pebbles, your small  
fingers clutching the dirt as though the wind would rend you  
as a spiderweb to the hand of a passerby,  
when you smiled,  
the clay jar fell from my hands.

*Caitlin Parker-Arnett, WA, Snohomish High School*

*FIRST PLACE WINNER*  
*FALL – WINTER 2007*

HOME : In Memory of Dr. Stephen Glosecki

While the carcinogenic monster ravaged  
your physical body,  
like a child clutching his sweet mother's hand,  
you caged your heart and fortified your soul. your spirit gleamed, the  
shield behind an infinite love for life— your sword.  
And from behind the hospital curtains,  
we heard the valiant battle, the clash of armor,  
mingled with reeking formaldehyde.

I want to kiss the strange, unsullied beauty  
in comfort. the cold slithers in through the cracks,  
and another's hearth becomes my cradle.

On a lonesome, dimly lit subway,  
we strangers stand two feet apart. eyes shift  
from the once shiny floor  
to the jagged glass lights above. One cries for the past,  
one yearns for the future.  
with hands in pockets, gripping an outdated map,  
he says, I'm going home.  
I say,  
I'll see you there.  
*Cynthia Huynh, AL, The Altamont School*

# *SECOND PLACE WINNER*

## *FALL – WINTER 2007*

Artifacts

I.

Patches of sepia lay scattered across my bedroom floor in pigments of faded birthday cards and greetings from Peru – in brownish gray hues of what once was, and what could have been-- for me – had not the cannon balls been fired through the windows

These are the remnants of the days before secession.

There are poodle skirts and Go-Go boots and plastic-shrouded sofas, there are Christmas trees and coffee cakes and Sunday raviolis, and there is merriment, so abundant, that not even the most discerning of ears could perceive the advancing rebel armies above the clatter of the wine.

II.

With each uncovered layer, dust is lifted, is liberated off lampshades – off tablecloths and China cabinets

With each inverted revolution, color saturates, it permeates the walls – colors condense and unify

With each back flip of sand, shattered fragments of glass now crystallize, lucid, the Renaissance.

And this is my Enlightenment: An Eightfold Path obstructed through a film of black and white – Impalpable, intangible – to me.

III.

Torrents of sepia are gushing from the floor, and the walls bear no asylum, as each crevice has borne witness to the wedding invitations: sent, received, R.S.V.P.-ed by all  
(Before the postal routes were severed)

I hear the shots heard 'round the table that forced my would-be comrades to disperse  
I scrub the blood stains off the floor to no avail.

IV.

And now the walls have paled, the seats have cleared – glass is broken once again.  
The blinds are shut, the doors are locked – it's safe to say – we're in the Dark Ages.  
*Marcella Kocolatos, NY, Archbishop Molloy High School*

*EASTERDAY POETRY AWARD WINNER*  
*2007 - 2008*

Meeting Poetry

I have been lucky. Fed certain slants of light with bottles of milk,  
I listened to hoofbeats of Revere's horse  
to assuage the slippery terrors of darkness  
and spent snowy evenings lingering in the woods

But I had not really met it yet

For one day it caught me, a thing of the swamp,  
that creature you always feared would clasp its slimy hand about your tender ankle.

And it did – and down, down, into the darkness, catching glimpses all the way

hair like sawgrass

taloned feet

clear blue eyes

blowhole nestled between shoulder blades

light now gone

but smell it: rotting fish

hear water woosh

slower... drifting

another carcass, belly up?

No. I developed gills of my own. I can see in the dim light, now.

There are sharks, too.

I am swimming out to meet them.

*Hannah Cyrus, ME, Orono High School*

*SECOND PLACE WINNER  
SPRING – SUMMER 2008*

Thou Art Rophe

she sat with her head bent in a dreary  
garden enclaved with snow  
her dress, unstained in pure white  
had it not been for the hair of her dark curls  
her frame would have been completely invisible

if one were to step so delicately close and quietly  
the eternity of one tear slip its way down her soft cheek

and inside her heart beat with turmoil  
of thoughts of he and the way he cried  
the way he saw every single part  
of everything she was

upon a rock a few feet away  
or possibly hundreds upon thousands of years past  
sat one lone man, his head bent  
his appearance poor and disheveled  
he sobbed into his weathered hands  
so completely heaven and earth could be heard in tears  
could this be my Rabboni?

oh God, if it be so to Thee  
please let this cup pass from me  
*Rachel Brandon, MN, Hillcrest Lutheran Academy*

*FIRST PLACE WINNER  
FALL – WINTER 2008*

Now He's Eating the Dollar

*for Orkief, who did it to his lunch money*

No matter how you looked at it, torn is torn, yet--  
how to explain. The shreds didn't exactly flutter achingly  
to the ground, catching the sunlight all the while  
like some skeins of flying fish; afterwards,

there was to be no full moon hanging above the Italian rooftops  
like a note of music following your green coup,  
no bark uncurling itself from the noses of trees and falling  
in scrolls about your feet. Who would shear the bark

as from some horny, wooden sheep, anyway?  
No, there was no post-coital cigarette after hours  
of marionetting in a hotel with soundproof walls.  
If you did things impulsively, then that was okay,  
fine, even. The sun still set

like a tasty piece of roadkill on the windshield.  
Pebbles still winked at you, sledgehammers still hurt.  
Everything was fine, and the young man, having burned  
his fortune, could retire contentedly. And the "meaning"

was crawling away already while we spoke it so that we had to stare  
after it leaving its trail on the grass  
like somewhere water has just run.

*Qing Zhang, NJ, Tenafly High School*



*SECOND PLACE WINNER*  
*FALL – WINTER 2008*

Life as the City

The day wraps around itself - graying petals raise the walls of a secret garden  
around the sun, baring their water-plump underbellies to the world.  
The sky tips back in tremors of laughter, water draining  
from its eaves, spreading the city over a lightless sky and dousing it in shades of gray.

A puddle of silver satin sheets squirms beneath me. Knees rolled  
into my chest, arms draped around them, my eyes averted past the tear-  
stained windows. A tube of beer-battered light tunnels from the streetlamp,  
the edges siphoned away, leaving a haze where warmth meets damp night.

The sheets follow my feet to the floor -- they don't make it  
past the bedroom. A bellow of thunder greets my hand at the front door.  
Night and rain replace my skin in folds. I am the city.  
I taste the perspiration fill my lungs, feel thousands of lights embed themselves  
in my body, hear rippling voices tuck the kids away from the storm.  
The cool rain drips through thick fingers  
of tar into my veins, and my heart beats erratically, in sync with a million others.

Tangerine wicker claws at the back of my legs, and I'm drawn back  
away from the world. The wicker chair is new, not broken in yet - like this Minneapolis  
life. It needs to be tested, sculpted, softened. A private smile  
creeps out into the city; and I let the people do the breathing for me.

*Allison Malecha, MN, The Blake School*