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Still Another Definition of Poetry

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Mythcon 51: The Mythic, the Fantastic, and the Alien

Albuquerque, New Mexico • Postponed to: July 30 – August 2, 2021



Additional Keywords

Sarah Beach

Still Another Definition of Poetry?

Fling out color, nuzzle warmth and hide;
 still know, a patchwork quilt may be a poem
 (Word patches are less comfortable--they
 snare,
 disguise all sense and will not cover).
 Orange paisley clasped against dark green
 and soft November glistens on the pane;
 texture and design prod memory towards a
 poem.

You turn? Catch faint tunes and funny?
 Pretzel-twisted, salted by the tongue.
 Prankish, tossed in air to plop in mouth.
 The child amazes, soars, and leaps, and
 heaving giants in teaspoons of hot chocolate,
 drops them;
 clanks his spoon, the trusty sword, to cup,
 then vaults inside and flies at once to Mars.
 Little off-key epics? "Throat-doodles," says
 the child:
 the honest poet and the poem.

A pumpkin startles--there, upon the sill,
 glowing from behind a bamboo blind.
 An image for a poem? Or symbol?
 Death lurking in each life; woman
 rounded in repose, delving forth, within,
 moving as a stream of laughter
 disarming flatness, rippling through a frown.

Sniff rye bread. Earthen brown and shaggy
 crusted,
 rich-smelling, deep like gnomie caves
 you enter with a question and remain.
 Then rocks crescendo, organ music swells
 rising as white flame, stalagmite crystal.
 Coalescence sudden and so slow.
 Come. Your question is resolved to Quest.
 The maker as the poet, puzzles over form;
 feels her way towards whatness and to one,
 til wholeness satisfies by crumbling once
 again.

No, Amalgam is not poem, nor artful fragment,
 or crucibles would break in ecstasy
 and gold exude from every chemist's flask.

Become a Ouija board to find pure soul.
 Perfect iambs, five to every sweep
 across the table top. Invoke the god
 of mathematics and of prophecy.
 Repeated umm-mms, some say, achieve salva-
 tion.

If you can jog to number, dance, mix dough
 (anapest for muffins. Trochee, scones),
 invention by the metronome may bring
 prolific art (and progeny) like Bach's.
 Who will march to Sousa, beating time?
 Step out of line. Refuse--to wait. To go.
 Surge, shiver, plunge, and urge incessantly.
 Heave ripe berries at the wall
 til anger smashed, runs bleeding.
 Oh lovely eggs, denied a truer form.
 Collapse between the stove and frigidaire.
 The poem exults in having slain the poet;
 parades around the kitchen, pounding pots;
 pours syrup on the glistening, scoured floor.
 The poet is not spread. She is not there.
 Balanced on a stool with can of beans,
 she climbs a stalk. Still growing. Way past
 shelves, past
 ceiling, higher. She finds she is

the giant; she is the child.
 Proclaims her strength (from eating beans).
 Asserts
 that climbing stools that turn to stalks,
 while downing
 beans and growing higher, low,
 and both together--opening cans meanwhile--
 is hard. But once you see the stalk--
 infernal beanstalk--the choice must be to
 climb.
 --Maryilyn Jurich

Editor's Note: Due to a pressing Postal deadline, combined with the Tolkien theme of this issue with so much material presented, several features were compressed or omitted. Those omitted should appear in #38. *Mythlore* needs to expand its number of pages in each issue, given the wealth of material available. If you agree, a letter of support would help at the Council of Stewards' budget meeting in February.



MYTHOPOEIC FANTASY AWARD -- 1983

Nominations for the Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for 1983 are now requested. Any fantasy work "in the spirit of the Inklings Circle" which has first been published in 1983 is eligible. Fantasies appearing for the first time in paperback in 1983 but which were published earlier in hardback and were not nominated for that year are considered eligible.

Books in a projected series may be nominated if they stand on their own. A work such as Tolkien's The Two Towers, which is obviously an integral part of a whole, are not eligible. In such cases, when the final volume comes out the work may be nominated as a whole.

Volunteers to serve on the selection committee must be Mythopoeic Society members willing to read the nominations. Volunteers should send their names and addresses, plus a statement whether or not they consent to their names and addresses being distributed to the other committee members, to Christine Lowentrou, 115 5th Street #2, Seal Beach, CA 90704. Committee members are not required to share names and addresses; this is an aid requested by last year's committee for those who wish to exchange thoughts on various books to be able to do so.

The Council of Stewards wishes to extend its thanks to last year's committee, particularly to those who have shared their thoughts on bettering the MFA selection process. It feels this award is worthwhile and appreciate the committee's efforts to see it well established.

Nominations and volunteers please write to Christine Lowentrou (address above) by February 20, 1984. The list of nominated books plus the list of committee members who consent to sharing their names will go out before March 1, 1984. Voting on selecting 5 finalists from the list will be due on May 1, 1984, and the final vote will be July 15, 1984.