

## Annual Report

### Events Calendar *Summer and Fall*

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Tuesday  
August 8<sup>th</sup>  
7:30 PM

**Kevin Prufer  
&  
Gary Young**

Bookshop Santa Cruz  
1520 Pacific Ave.

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Sunday  
August 13<sup>th</sup>  
2:00 PM

**Poet/Speak  
with  
Luke Warm Water**

Santa Cruz Main Library  
Meeting Room  
224 Church St.

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Sunday  
September 10<sup>th</sup>  
2:00 PM

**Poet/Speak  
All Open Reading**

Santa Cruz Main Library  
Meeting Room  
224 Church St.

**Memory** is a tricky beast. At least mine is. I remember well when Poetry Santa Cruz did not exist, at all. I remember sitting at a table at Lulu Carpenter's Café, with Phil Wagner, talking about who we might bring on board to help us get Poetry Santa Cruz off the ground. Len Anderson's name popped up right away. We asked him to join us, and before we could look up the spelling of Rumpelstiltskin, Poetry Santa Cruz had become a reality.

Since then, it's been somewhat of a blur, at least for me. We've done so much in what feels like such a short time that I've lost track of the official markers. But this I know: in March of this year we had our Fifth Birthday. We were too busy organizing our reading events and special projects to bother with a celebration. We mentioned it at a reading and moved on.

Another milestone reached during the past year was the passage of our first full year as an official not-for-profit incorporated in the State of California and having tax-exempt status for federal and state income taxes. Donors can claim tax exemptions on donation made directly to Poetry Santa Cruz. In return for those donations, we will continue to steward and stretch those dollars to bring you what may well be the richest offering of poetry in the country for such a modest budget. At least, that is what we are aiming for.

You already know about our regular reading series. Every second Tuesday of the month we import a poet of national standing and present a poetry reading at a local venue. Usually, the visiting poet is teamed up with an accomplished local poet. And some months, we present two readings. This year we left enough breathing room in our calendar to be able to improvise, should an attractive possibility surface on short notice. I'm happy to report that our visiting poets almost always leave town with a very good impression of our community. They are especially impressed with the quality of our audiences. (See Brian Teare's comments on the back fold of this newsletter.) For that, we are grateful to you, and we renew our commitment to provide for you the highest quality readings within our power to present.

May of this year marked our third consecutive presentation of the Annual Santa Cruz County High School Poetry Competition. This project involves many months of preparation. Our tireless colleague, Len Anderson, does much of the background organizing for this event, and as each year's reading nears, other Board members become heavily involved. This year Marcia Adams and Maggie Paul took on much of the load.

## Events Calendar

Fall

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Tuesday  
September 19<sup>th</sup>  
7:30 PM

August Kleinzahler  
&  
Piotr Sommer

Bookshop Santa Cruz  
1520 Pacific Ave.

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Tuesday  
September 26<sup>th</sup>  
7:30 PM

Robert Sward

Bookshop Santa Cruz  
1520 Pacific Ave.

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Sunday  
October 8<sup>th</sup>  
2:00 PM

Poet/Speak  
with  
Featured Reader TBA

Santa Cruz Main Library  
Meeting Room  
224 Church St.

~~~~~

Tuesday  
October 10<sup>th</sup>  
7:30 PM

Matthea Harvey  
&  
Co-reader TBA

Bookshop Santa Cruz  
1520 Pacific Ave.

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Saturday  
October 21<sup>st</sup>  
Poetry Bus Tour  
Reading

## Annual Report

For the second year in a row, the event was held at The Attic. Maggie did a great job as the MC, and in my opinion, it was the best gathering ever. The quality of the poetry was exceptional and The Attic was packed with students, parents, teachers, and many of you. All in all, a terrific event.

Poetry Santa Cruz continues to sponsor and present Poet/Speak, on the second Sunday of each month, at the Santa Cruz Main Library. These events start at 2 PM and are hosted by Joyce Keller. Most months, Poet/Speak presents a featured reader. Every month Poet/Speak features an "open mike" which provides area poets the opportunity to read work before a live audience.

Also during the past year, Poetry Santa Cruz became a co-sponsor of A New Cadence Poetry Series, created and organized by Jim Maughn. Jim's series features emerging voices from San Francisco and the Bay area and is usually held at Loudon Nelson Community Center.

One of the highlights of the past year was a glorious reading by Robert Bly. We packed The Attic for Robert's event. And I'm happy to say that Robert will be back for an encore next year. We are grateful for the initiative of Wendy Martyna and Nils Peterson.

Another highlight of the past year was the visit by California's most recent Poet Laureate, Al Young. After his reading, Al visited KUSP's The Poetry Show, then, From The Bookshelf, and finally, Mike Lambert's In The Groove jazz show, where he read poems inspired by jazz songs or artists.

If we can claim some measure of success at what we do, a good deal of credit must go to our collaborative efforts with other Santa Cruz

institutions. We have listed them on the front fold of this newsletter, and we are very grateful to them. I'd like to name them all, but I feel especially obliged to mention Bookshop Santa Cruz and the Cultural Council of Santa Cruz County. They have supported Poetry Santa Cruz from the beginning, and we are very grateful to them.

During the past year we embarked on a new collaboration, this one with Porter College at UCSC. It is made possible by the great George Hitchcock, whose generous financial gift to Porter College supports poetry projects that end up benefiting not only the university community, but also the broader community of poetry lovers. George Hitchcock's gift makes it possible for Poetry Santa Cruz readers to visit classrooms on the campus, have intimate conversations with the students, and be remunerated for it. And it is this remuneration that, in turn, makes Poetry Santa Cruz an even more attractive venue for poets around the country.

### Annual Report

Finally, I want to alert you to a rather remarkable turn of events that's taken place in the past year. Santa Cruz Good Times is now devoting two full pages a month to poetry and poetry related essays. While Poetry Santa Cruz is not officially involved in this celebration of poetry, it is probably fair to say that we have helped create the climate in which publisher Ron Slack, Managing Editor Greg Archer, and Features Editor Christa Martin have felt comfortable devoting this much space to an art form that is all too marginalized in most communities. I am grateful for their faith in the community and for their vote of confidence in poetry. Please, consider letting them know how you feel about it. I do not know of any other small community in the country where poetry is so honored. Also, I have it on good authority that in addition to two pages a

month in the print edition, soon the Good Times will be featuring a weekly on-line version of Poetry Corner.

I close with a thank you to my fellow Board members, listed below, and especially to the Everything Man, Len Anderson. And of course, I thank you. Without you, nothing happens. Your encouragement, your attendance at PSC events, your volunteer efforts, and your financial support make what we do possible. We are all in debt to you.

**Dennis Morton**, President

### **The Board of Directors**

Dennis Morton, President  
Marcia Adams, Vice President  
Len Anderson, Secretary-  
Treasurer  
Beth Pittenger  
Tilly Washburn Shaw  
Robert Sward  
Philip Wagner

### **Members**

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### **Events Calendar**

Fall

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Sunday  
November 12<sup>th</sup>  
2:00 PM

Poet/Speak  
Open Reading

Santa Cruz Main Library  
Meeting Room  
224 Church St.

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Tuesday  
November 14<sup>th</sup>  
7:30 PM

Jennifer Michael Hecht  
&  
Matthew Zapruder

Location TBA

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Tuesday  
November 28<sup>th</sup>  
7:30 PM

Joseph Stroud  
&  
Co-readers

Location TBA

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Sunday  
December 10<sup>th</sup>  
2:00 PM

Poet/Speak  
Open Reading

Santa Cruz Main Library  
Meeting Room  
224 Church St.

## Ghazal Explained by Len Anderson

**Ghazal (pronounced "ghuzzle") is an Arabic word that means "talking to women."**

### History

The Ghazal is believed to be the oldest poetic form still in wide use. It was developed in Persia in the 10th century AD from the Arabic verse form *qasida*. It was brought to India with the Mogul invasion in the 12th century. The Ghazal tradition is currently practiced in Iran (Farsi), Pakistan (Urdu) and India (Urdu and Hindi). In India and Pakistan, Ghazals are set to music and have achieved commercial popularity as recordings and in movies. A number of American poets, including Adrienne Rich and W.S. Merwin, have written Ghazals, usually without the strict pattern of the traditional form.

### Form

A traditional Ghazal consists of five to fifteen couplets (called *sher*), typically seven. A refrain (a repeated word or phrase—called *radif*) appears at the end of both lines of the first couplet (called *matla*) and at the end of the second line in each succeeding couplet. In addition, one or more words before the refrain are rhymes or partial rhymes (*quafia*). The lines should be of approximately the same metrical length (*beher*). The poet may use the final couplet (*maqta*) as a signature couplet, using his or her name in first, second or third person, and giving a more direct declaration of thought or feeling to the reader.

### Style

Each couplet should be a poem in itself, like a pearl in a necklace. There should not be continuous development of a subject from one couplet to the next through the poem. The refrain provides a link among the couplets, but they should be detachable, quotable, grammatical units. There should be an epigrammatic terseness, yet each couplet should be lyric and evocative.

### Themes

"In Persian, it has been practiced for, at least, a thousand years. ...

This is not unlike the predicament in which one finds oneself when in love; there is the joy of being in love, but there is also the bondage. Ghazal is partially about bondage and about one's attempt to become free. Thinking of ghazal, of course, one often imagines a herd of gazelles; ghazal actually represents pastoral romance and love and at times sexual foreplay and intercourse in the garden. It is a return to the garden; it is a celebration of the garden and paradise, also an attempt to lament the loss and the fall; it is an attempt to resemble perfection and control in an otherwise chaotic and horrific universe. It is a challenge to insanity, lack of immunity and responsiveness in the world.

Like every flower in the garden, ghazal is very fragile but it is as certain as growth and beauty. It is the juncture of harmony between the flower and the poet. It is the paradise but it is also the cage. Thus ghazal constructs and deconstructs fall, condemnation, exile, death, disease, imprisonment, treachery, deceit, acceptance, worship, adoration, desire, love, oneness with god, and unity with life and death. It is the celebration of the mindless chaos and a satire of chaotic tyranny. ...

Ghazal will not relent its love letter format either, its erotic rupture, its celebration of the senses, youth, glory of the world while knowing that this too shall pass and that human life is all but a moment in a very old universe. Ultimately ghazal is a testimony to the power of love, love of life, god, and love of the beloved and all in words. So ghazal is a celebration of the word, of poetry. It is bondage but also the ethereal freedom that bondage affords."

—Ali Zarrin, *Selected Ghazals*, 1998

## Len's Advice

Ease into the form, first learning to write couplets loosely on the same theme, but without refrain or rhyme. You can always write two lines, especially if you have that refrain as a touchstone. Therefore the first thing to do is come up with the refrain. Pick a word you like, that has some resonance for you, some metaphorical richness. Keep a running list of them. Writing one couplet at a time, say, one per day, gives you a chance to wander away from the previous ones. The ghazal takes a fresh turn with each new couplet. Ideally there should also be a surprise or turn from the first line to the second line in each couplet. Each couplet must be like a poem in itself. Write too many couplets and pick out the best ones and the ones that offset each other and give some kind of balance. Then worry about the first and last couplets. The last couplet may be more personal or what you walk away with from the material in the poem. It can evoke your name, pen name, a pun on your name, or something symbolic of you in first, second or third person.

The tradition of the form is that it accepts or even invites a certain amount of craziness. Make the craziness felt and witty and intelligent. "What defines the ghazal is a constant longing."—Agha Shahid Ali

## References

*Ravishing Disunities: Real Ghazals in English* by Shahid Ali Agha (Editor), Sarah Suleri Goodyear (Introduction and Afterword). 107 ghazals by English-language poets, including W. S. Merwin, William Matthews, John Hollander, and Diane Ackerman.

*Masterpieces of Urdu Ghazal: From the 17th to the 20th Century* by K.C. Kanda.

*Welcoming Fighani: Imitation and Poetic Individuality in the Safavid-Mughal Ghazal* (Bibliotheca Iranica. Literature Series, No. 5) by Paul E. Losensky.

Len's essay on the internet:

<http://www.baymoon.com/~ariadne/form/ghazal.htm>

History of the Urdu ghazal:

<http://www.msci.memphis.edu/~ramamurt/ghazal.html>

Classical definition of the ghazal:

<http://www.cs.wisc.edu/~navin/india/songs/ghalib/ghazal.def.html>

## Exercises

- Write couplets loosely on the same theme not worrying about a refrain.
- Write a ghazal using your totem animal as the refrain word (*radif*). If you don't have a totem animal, pick your favorite animal. Or before dropping off to sleep, ask for a dream to give you your totem animal.
- Write a ghazal to your lover's totem animal. Perhaps use your own totem animal in the signature couplet.
- Write a group ghazal with each person in the group contributing one couplet. Begin by asking for refrains and vote to pick the one to be used (first).
- Write a group ghazal in which one person writes the first line of couplet and another writes the second.
- Write a group linked couplet poem (without refrain). Each couplet picks and repeats some element (word, image, idea) from the previous couplet in a fresh way.

## Internet Resources by Beth Pittenger

Many of you have discovered the internet as a resource for various things. Did you know that there are wonderful links to places where poetry and other writing are featured? One such place has a special significance that I would like to describe. It is called **The Critical Poet**.

There are tiered forums for you to post your own poetry and get comments, from mild critique to final polishing. With over 4500 members from around the world, your poems and other writing receive amazingly sharp and helpful suggestions. The people are well-read, intelligent, and most of all decent. And the site is well-moderated so you are guaranteed quality responses.

I highly recommend checking it out. It is simple to join: merely create a screen name, and you become a member with the freedom to post anything you wish. It is a great opportunity to workshop your writing and to participate in another kind of community, very real and valuable, despite it being “virtual.”

[www.criticalpoet.com](http://www.criticalpoet.com)

## Poetry Bus Tour Headed Our Way

Get ready for an invasion. But don't worry. You won't have to hide the kids or stockpile comestibles. This expeditionary force is friendly. It will consist of a score of poets and their support team. They'll be armed to the tongue and they might make you laugh or cry. But they're as harmless as art, and all they need to roll to victory is an audience. That's us, folks. So, mark Saturday, October 21<sup>st</sup> on the calendar.

You can follow the exploits of The Poetry Bus Tour as it meanders the coasts and heartland of America, on its way to Santa Cruz. *The Good Times* will be printing news of the Tour on a weekly basis.

Right now, a team of collaborators is lining up a venue and planning welcoming events. There will be at least two major readings and, possibly, several workshops. Details will be revealed as they become available. Keep your eyes on the Poetry Santa Cruz website for breaking news.

[www.poetrysantacruz.org](http://www.poetrysantacruz.org)

## Just Rhetoric

### **Anaphora**

*is a trope that involves the repetition of the same or similar words or phrases at the beginnings of lines or sentences.*

### **Walt Whitman Song of Myself**

Have you reckon'd a thousand acres much? have you  
reckon'd the earth much?  
Have you practis'd so long to read?  
Have you felt so proud to get at the meaning of  
poems?  
Stop this day and night with me and you shall possess  
the origin of all poems,  
You shall possess the good of the earth and sun, (there  
are millions of suns left.)  
You shall no longer take things at second or third  
hand, nor look through the eyes of the dead,  
nor feed on the spectres in books,  
You shall not look through my eyes either, nor take  
things from me,  
You shall listen to all sides and filter them from your  
self.



## Poetry from our Visitors

### Sunlight

I trained a magnifying glass  
on the ant with the crumb  
and he stepped away  
from the pool of light.  
I held the beam  
wherever he was going.  
At once he shriveled  
to a tiny black line  
whose ends rose slowly  
to meet each other.  
I aimed at my hand  
and sensed that fire  
infinitely distant, close,  
then inside me:  
when I dropped the lens  
I felt no comfort  
and called my father's name.

### Dennis Nurkse

from *The Fall* (Knopf, 2002)

### A Hand

A hand is not four fingers and a thumb.

Nor is it palm and knuckles,  
not ligaments or the fat's yellow pillow,  
not tendons, star of the wristbone, meander of veins.

A hand is not the thick thatch of its lines  
with their infinite dramas,  
nor what it has written,  
not on the page,  
not on the ecstatic body.

Nor is the hand its meadows of holding, of shaping—  
not sponge of rising yeast-bread,  
not rotor pin's smoothness,  
not ink.

The maple's green hands do not cup  
the proliferant rain.  
What empties itself falls into the place that is open.

A hand turned upward holds only a single, transparent ques-  
tion.

Unanswerable, humming like bees, it rises, swarms, departs.

### Jane Hirshfield

from *Given Sugar, Given Salt* (HarperCollins, 2001)

### Who Stole the Horses from the Indians?

*Who stole the horses from the Indians?*  
my father used to ask

*Was it you?*

*Oh no!* I'd pipe. *Not me.*  
But my father always knew.

Then there was another game:  
*Where are you going?*

*To China,* I'd announce,  
*Ashbury Park, Hollywood.*

*Say hello to Dorothy Lamour. Don't forget  
to write.*

And off I'd spring,  
but never fast enough.  
He'd catch me by the arm and haul me in.

*Where are you going?*  
my father used to ask me when I was grown.

*Alaska,* I would tell him,  
*Lisbon, Montreal.*

*You can't,*  
my father would tell me.  
*Drifters live that way.*

But he was older and I was quick  
*You can't,* he'd say.

And off I'd go.  
*Where are you going?*  
my father asks,

and now he's old.  
*Vancouver,* I tell him,  
*San Francisco, Idaho.*

He just smiles sadly,  
and says hardly anything at all.

### August Kleinzahler

from *Red Sauce, Whiskey and Snow*  
(HarperCollins, 1996)

### Nana

Each drop of sea contains  
all the fish that have ever lived.  
Each grit of sand, the heart  
of all the rocks that have risen  
above the land or laid upon it.

When Ava, who is ten days old today  
cries, and I sing her the lullaby  
that makes her head go soft against  
my shoulder, she is every old woman  
who has ever fallen asleep.

### Lola Haskins

from *Snakebird* (Anhinga, 2004)

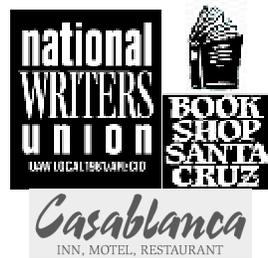
In an internet interview, **Brian Teare** says of his reading experiences, “All of them were good experiences, and many of them were downright lovely: John and Christine of Open Books in Seattle were the most marvelous, supportive, welcoming folks imaginable and their shop is a jewel of both the book business and poetry culture; Deborah Landau and Matthew Zapruder at KGB provided fabulous warm camaraderie, perfect atmosphere and a big crowd, plus Manhattan-octane cocktails.”

“I was really most surprised and moved by my experience at **Poetry Santa Cruz.**”

Brian Teare continues, “First Dennis Morton interviewed me for his radio show, and we had a lively, smart conversation--and he really honored the book with a close and affectionate reading; second, the reading itself was attended by one of the most responsive and attentive audiences I've ever been graced with. The people who came up afterward said much that has stayed with me since--and it's the possibility of generous reciprocity that I love so much about readings. It's a real gift when it works, when both reader and audience are receptive to it.”

**Poetry Santa Cruz** is supported, in part, by a grant from the **Cultural Council of Santa Cruz County** .

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