

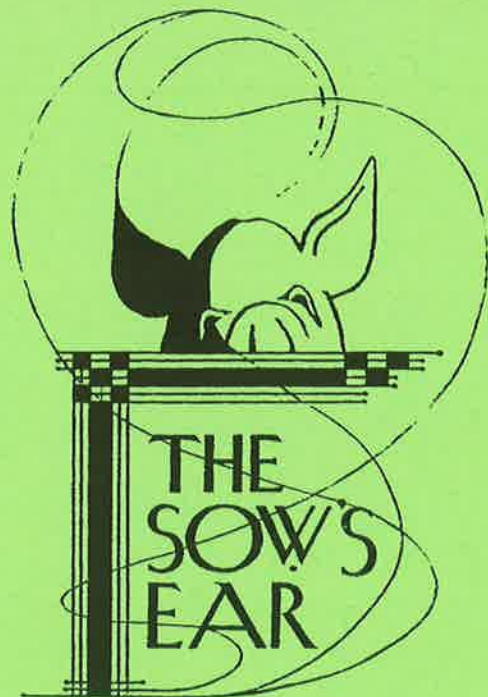
VOL. XIV, NO. 2

SUMMER 2004



THE SOW'S EAR

POETRY REVIEW



QUARTERLY \$5.00

SUBSCRIPTIONS — \$15.00 for four issues
(\$22.00 Canada, \$34.00 England)

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SUBMISSIONS

Send us 1-5 poems, a short bio, and an SASE.
We are open to "discovering" unpublished poets.
We publish occasional reviews, interviews with
poets, and short features, but no fiction. We invite
submission of black-and-white drawings,
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Send *regular submissions* of poetry and art to:
Kristin Zimet, Editor
217 Brookneill Drive
Winchester, VA 22602

Send *contest entries* and *all other business* to :
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Donalds, SC 29638-9115

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SALLY SEABRIGHT

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ISSN 1535-5462

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DAUGHTERS OF THE DIVINE REDEEMER

At the end of the school year,
 Sister reminded us to bring
 buckets and scouring pads
 so that we could wash the legs
 of our desks and chairs.
 We took this final
 assignment to heart, sinking
 our arms up to our elbows
 in water, frothing each leg
 to a pink or blue convulsion,
 depending on which brand
 our mothers bought, Brillo or
 SOS, that matched Mary's
 garments, watching over us
 from her corner plinth
 as she crushed the snake's head.
 And when Sister turned
 her back or left the room,
 we slathered each other in suds,
 sixty-five fourth graders
 laughing at the joy of freedom
 so close at hand. Even Jesus,
 bloodied on his cross above
 the cursive alphabet seemed
 lighter, the nails that ripped his
 hands and feet lessening their grip.
 When we turned our backs on
 the agony of learning, the metal
 legs of the chairs upended on
 every desk shone like moonlight
 on a still lake. Our hair sticky,
 our clothes drenched, our faces,
 arms and legs smudged
 with gray wool suds,
 we walked home swinging
 our empty buckets in the air.

Jackie Bartley
 Holland, Michigan

INHERITANCE

Soon it will be evening. I've learned words to divide the day,
 week, to say *month* and *year*, count to a thousand.
 And because you can't wait long to acquire time and thirst,
 I learned the word for water.

The Tsfat tour guide speaks English easily, thanks
 to her American mother. She has long, rust-colored hair
 like a *havdallah* candle braided down her back. She lights
 her languages and divides them so we share

the significance of 613 pomegranate seeds
 or the road that brought us here called Salt,
 what Romans were paid
 to preserve their food.

What is precious changes. What is difficult
 will also change. First, sounds stuck and the tongue paralyzed.
 Then a crawl through sentences, come
 to a verb missing like a front tooth. You say *wait, little, slow*.

It's different learning a language you're supposed to already know.
 You want it to father you like Jerusalem sun, bless
 your neck and shoulders. It should already be there,
 in the way you walk, the way you pass salt to your mother.

Melisa Cahnmann
 Athens, Georgia

