

# Kaleidoscope

A Poetry Anthology

by

The Laguna Honda Hospital

Poetry Group

2009

# Introduction and Acknowledgments

Every week a group of Laguna Honda residents gathers together to explore the joys and challenges of poetry. Some come with past writing experience, some with curiosity and no writing experience. Each resident brings his or her enthusiasm and passion for self-expression. All of these residents have some type of physical challenge with which they cope on a daily basis. As one poet, Paul Hendrickson, writes, "Devastating strokes/ change the rules/ of the game I'm playing." While the "rules" may have changed and daily life with a disability is a new "game," the imaginations of these poets know no bounds. The poets are committed to being seen and heard as full, multi-faceted human beings. Their poems illustrate their vitality, their sensitivity, and their engagement with the world around them.

This anthology celebrates the 11<sup>th</sup> edition of *Kaleidoscope* and in it the poets continue to explore a wide range of ideas and topics. In "Speed," A. Faye Hicks reflects upon her life's journey. "I speed around curves / of shame and pain, / I stop at the signs of weakness. / I dance at the doorways / of love and gain."

Shirley Middleton envisions a new era in "This is the Year."  
"I imagine the six o'clock news today. / Peace and plenty  
broke out all over the world."

Denise Perlman experiments with language in  
"Ode to *D*." ". . . to be departed to the distances of the  
drunken soul, / to be definitely desirous of the distance  
of life." The joys and delights of life are encouraged in  
Mitchell ZefTel's "This Classic Fun Day." ". . . it's okay / to  
slouch away a day / because life can be fun, / so chew  
on Milk Duds, / lick on all-day suckers. / It's truly okay to  
have fun."

Every week I watch these poets put pen to paper,  
searching for words to describe their inner and outer  
worlds. While this can be a daunting process for anyone,  
the spirit that fills the poetry room is one of fearlessness.  
Again and again, I witness how creativity and self-  
expression are not limited by one's circumstances. As  
poet Paul Hendrickson says: "Everyone has a voice,  
he or she just needs to find it."

As always, the Laguna Honda poetry group offers  
*Kaleidoscope* to the reader in hopes that he or she  
will be nourished by the poems and inspired by the  
courage and commitment it took to create them.

It continues to be my privilege to work with  
each of these poets and to learn from all of them.

My sincere thanks to friends and colleagues for their assistance with this project. Special thanks to Yvonne Cannon, Vicky Julian and Penny Scott for their editorial assistance and to Richard Goldberg for the cover design and artwork. Special thanks also to the Social Service Department for its continued support.

Sharon Pretti LCSW  
Editor and Poetry Group Facilitator  
2009

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Frank Ahern

Elizabeth Cutler

Colleen Crawford

Sharon Grace

Paul Hendrickson

A. Faye Hicks

Paul Hoskinson

Barbara Jamison

Shirley Middleton

Denise Perlman

Orin Smith

Jim Wimer

Mitchell ZefTel

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**SWIRL**

## **SPEED**

I have traveled miles,  
lived throughout my woes and wiles.  
The road of my life is bumpy.  
I am woeful,  
yet I am hopeful.  
I speed around curves  
of shame and pain,  
I stop at the signs of weakness.  
I dance at the doorways  
of love and gain.

Yes, I have traveled  
throughout the highway of Earth's life.  
Tears I have shed, but  
smiles light my face  
because I conquer ups and downs.  
I go on and on, I rebel,  
for I am a warrior on this highway to heaven.

A. Faye Hicks

## ODE TO *D*

To begin with, *D* is daring,  
to be departed to the distances of the drunken soul,  
to be definitely desirous of the distance of life.  
I was once called *D-girl* by a friend named Doug  
and forever  
we doodled into each others' days.

Denise Perlman

## AT THE STILL POINT OF THE TURNING WORLD

People slurping cappuccino,  
30,000 children daily dead  
because of hunger, etc.  
News of Burma also known as Myanmar.  
Pity so many bodies,  
nowhere to sleep, not even rice, etc.  
People at Starbucks  
downloading rock porn, etc.  
Children might have had  
clean drinking water, smelly rice,  
reused syringes, but  
aid workers weren't allowed in.  
I think G-d is here,  
but people are like rice.  
Some people die and dry up  
in river beds, and become also angels.  
Others turn to Starbucks,  
yet in this confusion,  
sometimes there is salvation,  
like rice mixed with water.

Mitchell ZefTel

## **PRAYER**

Some think that prayer is the "Our Father,"  
the "Hail Mary," the "Glory Be,"  
the rosaries, the stations, etc.

I used to think this way too.

As a matter of fact, my life was going  
to be about these things in some way,  
but also, in some ways, it wasn't.

To me, it's more about the meaning behind  
these things and the path of the church  
is just another way to peace.

I think we try to be loved, loving,  
and lovable in all that we do.

Everything we say and do fits into this  
somehow. The first way I mentioned  
may get you there, but, to me,  
the greatest prayer of all is life. Amen.

Paul Hendrickson

## CHANGES

My life is full of changes.

I was a little girl and now I am  
a grown-up woman.

I now have different things  
to think about.

The first, of course, is my son.

I want him to be happy  
and safe. I want to be  
a speak-the-truth person,  
let all the people know  
they are not alone.

We are here to take care of each other.

Yes, we can do it.

Barbara Jamison

## SWIRL

I can see myself swirl  
around the room in my new skirt,

swirl like dust in the wind,  
swirl like the top my child

plays with on the floor,  
swirl like a light on the tree.

If only I could see the swirling  
that is all around me.

Colleen Crawford

Blessed be Susan, Deilah, Alice, Kul, Socorro,  
nurse manager Joyce, and  
all the good nurses and CNAs (not to leave out  
Narcecil and Holliwod and all the good guys who are  
our good nurses).

They bring us water and ice.

They are sweet and shapely,  
skilled and nice.

And you know, on the Sweet Day

when all the Angels

gather and say and shout *Hooray!* to Benja,

Melody, Meddie, Meddie, Meddie,

Little Jessie, Lisa who gave me the beautiful green beads,

and all the good, good, GOOD nurses

at Laguna Honda who smile

while looking compassion in the eye,

touching us with gentle healing hands.

Blessed be the musicians, volunteers, priests,

pastors, nuns, singers, beauticians, clerks, therapists,

heads of departments, AT, PT, OT,

psychologists, porters, Cardito and Michael and others,

engineers, and all the staff

and all the construction workers  
and electricians and planners and all the other  
workers and fund-raisers and the architects  
and Florence Nightingale and all the other dreamers  
that inspired both the old and new  
Laguna Honda Hospitals.

Blessed be the animals at the farm and the lady  
who takes care of them.

Blessed be the pigeons, the gulls, the peregrine  
falcons, the crows, the cats, and all the animals  
that keep watch over and love the people  
at Laguna Honda Hospital.

*Blessed Be! Hooray! Hooray! Hooray!*

Sharon Grace

## **ASK ME**

Ask me for a moon and a star  
and I will give you the whole sky.

Ask me for a crystal moment of your time  
and I will give you the time of my life.

Ask me for a smile on my lips  
and I will give it with a loving kiss.

Ask me to walk with you for a while  
and I will walk with you all my life.

Ask me for a loving kiss  
and I will give you gratitude forever.

Jim Wimer

## **ROSA**

I tried to live by their rules all my life.  
Lord, I tried.  
I mopped and scrubbed  
till my knuckles were raw.  
There was never enough to feed my babies.  
The first one sighed good-bye in my arms.  
I just swallowed the hurt  
and kept scrubbing.  
I just plain wore myself out that day.

The back of the bus was crowded  
with rowdy folks  
and there was one empty seat  
and, Lord, I tried to keep going,  
but that seat looked like my mother's lap.  
And, Lord, I sat down.  
The bully bus driver told me to move.  
And I said no, Lord,  
I just said no.

Elizabeth Cutler

## **MAKE UP YOUR MIND**

Change your mind

reconsider.

Time will tell

time to yell.

Ying klang

yang bang.

Words clash

minds flash

Titans clash.

War of words

anxious times.

Sharp lines

decisions, revisions.

Frank Ahern

## **LA VIDA OR LIFE**

*Alabanza, alabanza, alabanza.*

*La vida libre.*

Celebrate a free life

'cause that is how life should be, free.

There should be lots of *felicidad*,

'cause there will be some of the opposite.

Make sure to smile, 'cause there will be tears.

And make it as big, and *grande* as you can.

As the poet said, "What is heaven for?"

Keep reaching for the stars,

and keep smiling.

*Mucha felicidad. Sonrisas* for everyone.

Shirley Middleton

# WHO KNEW

## THIS CLASSIC FUN DAY

Deb and Lucy didn't go to school.  
They devoured 111 Tootsie Rolls  
and saw *Batman* 13 times  
and had triple-bacon classics  
and boysenberry Slurpees,  
but mom saw them on Parakeet Blvd.,  
advised them that it's okay  
to slouch away a day  
because life can be fun,  
so chew on Milk Duds,  
lick on all-day suckers.  
It's truly okay to have fun.

Mitchell Zeftel

## OH MY GOD!

Hi God. Where are you?

I am about to complain a little  
so please listen. Why am I here?

Why am I on this planet with you?

Are you here?

If you are here, why are you listening  
to me? Since I don't see you

how do I know you're listening to me?

People need you in a jam.

Why do they have to go to you?

Why don't they go to themselves to see  
what they really need? Why you?

Sometimes questions aren't so bad.

Do you really know the answers?

Do you have the sense to speak  
and listen to me? I don't think so.

Why don't you let me come to my  
own conclusions—

that would be a way to listen to me.

Denise Perlman

## **ODE TO MATTHEW**

Ode to my heart.

Praise be to the rhythm it beats out  
at the sight of his face.

Ode to my hands.

Praise be to the rhythm they beat out  
on his drum.

Ode to his hands.

Praise be to the rhythm he plays on  
me.

Sharon Grace

## DOING WHAT WE ENJOY

It seems pretty obvious,  
doesn't it,  
at least to me anyway.  
Why are there so many  
people not doing this?  
Some don't know what they enjoy  
and don't enjoy much at all  
and some don't think they should  
do what they enjoy because it's wrong.  
When we do what we enjoy,  
it gets our attention.  
It gives quality to time spent, doesn't it?  
Aren't we much happier campers?  
When we're happy the world  
goes around more smoothly.  
Why would we choose otherwise?

Paul Hendrickson

## LET GO

Let stuff go.  
Stuff takes time  
yours and mine.  
Who needs stuff?  
Plenty is enough.  
Stuff gets lost  
drives me mad.  
Stuff I love  
isn't that sad.  
Problems, problems  
paradise lost.  
What's the cost?

Paradise regained  
surprise, surprise.  
Hall of fame  
stake your claim.  
We love stuff.  
How much is enough?  
Who needs stuff?  
How much is enough?

Hopes and dreams  
silent screams.  
Get over it  
what time is it?  
Blind man's stuff  
energy bank  
takes up time.  
Who has time?  
Just let go.  
On with the show.

Frank Ahern

## A TRUE STORY

When I was small, short  
and not very tall at all,  
I knew I loved angels  
and was always jumping on tables,  
chairs, and fences.  
I was able.

My uncle asked if I wanted wings,  
those beautiful things  
that moved and sang.  
So he put me on the floor

and shut the door, and held  
until things turned black.  
My uncle did not say *uncle*.  
I had to fight myself loose,  
as I was quicker than his liquor.

Jim Wimer

## WHO KNEW

On my own, my life was going well,  
coming from middle-class parents  
and graduating with honors from Harvard.  
Who knew?

Going to work on various projects  
and jobs in the government,  
then this half-white, half-black man,  
who worked on my staff, had the nerve  
to ask me out and I agreed. Who knew?

He had dreams, big dreams.  
Marrying me was one of them and I agreed.  
Who knew?

We had beautiful children. We kept  
achieving our dreams and then  
he told me he wanted to go for the big one.  
I was hesitant, but I agreed.

Things just kept falling into place.

I had my work and being a senator's wife  
was great, but first lady,  
the first African American first lady?  
Who knew? Great so far.

Shirley Middleton

## **ELIZABETH**

I, Elizabeth, sitting here  
with the weight  
of my country on my mind.  
Oh, if I could just for a day  
be that little girl and do the things  
that every girl does!

But now I have to sit on this throne  
and hope that I make the right decisions  
for my country.

Colleen Crawford

## DEAR FATHER

I miss you. Look in your heart,  
you know it's true.

My relationship with Christ, a holy son,  
God, the father, he is the most significant one.

Thinking of you reflects the world of man.  
You make me proud to be an African American.

I am sorry we have not spoken in years.  
I have become injured, a wheelchair,

the world of fears. Seriously, sometimes I cry  
over Christ's crucifixion, full of compassion, tears.

I rarely leave the state, California, or American land.  
Strange love of Africa, Egypt,

I hope you understand. No experience of father  
in my life. I am still young, looking for a wife.

Orin Smith

## **A CHAMPION**

I jog a half mile.  
I fly from tree to tree.  
I swim a marathon.  
This is while I sleep.

I awake happily,  
ready for a day  
in my wheelchair.  
Ready to rock and roll.  
The sun has risen.  
It may sound droll,  
but I am ready  
to roll into life,

to love earthly beauty,  
to be passionate and giving,  
to have another  
dream-filled night,  
and be a champion in my chair  
and fly high!

A. Faye Hicks

## **A VISITOR**

Saw my old friend Fred  
Me: overfed, in a hospital bed  
Him: limping, bloody  
A one-legged buddy  
Still looked the same  
On top of his game  
Robust and alive  
Thriving in hard times  
The shooting had stopped  
But would start again  
We chatted and then  
He said he had to go  
An amputee extra  
In a television show

Elizabeth Cutler

## THE BEAUTY OF GROWING UP

The beauty of growing up and becoming  
a woman, yes, a full-fledged woman.

I know I can do anything that I want.

My name is Barbara, but most people  
call me Barbie Doll. I am alive,  
alive and happy as can be.

I can hula in the sun  
in the morning and at night,  
maybe they should call me Hula Girl.

I love to be alive, I love people  
and hope they love me too.

Let's see—pretend you are on a beach  
in Hawaii, oh, how truly beautiful  
Hawaii is. I can see the sunlight  
and feel the breeze from above,  
oh, so good across my body.

I love the beauty of the sun,

I love the beauty of life,  
yes, life itself.

Barbara Jamison

# THE PARTY OF LIFE

## THE PARTY OF LIFE

I've been called to coordinate the party  
of life. I called the jugglers and the clowns,  
the singers and the animal trainers.

From the erudite to the passive,  
to the happy and the sad.

From the celebrities to the no-names,  
to the who's who and the who's not.

I've emailed everyone.

I hope you all received your invitations.

You're all invited.

The where and when and time  
are easy and you don't have to *RSVP*  
because the party begins in you  
and happens in any now that you feel.

Paul Hendrickson

## ODE TO THE BODY

Oh the body.

What would I do without a body?

I can see so many things with my eyes.

I can hear with my ears,

I smell so much with the nose—  
good and bad.

And the things I can taste

and say with my mouth.

Feeling fingers, hugging, holding hands.

A bottom to sit on,

legs that take me places

and feet that walked on pink sand,

gray asphalt, green, green grass,

blue-green water.

Thank goodness for the brain that remembers!

Shirley Middleton

## **TO MA DILL**

I was and am your second son,  
blessed with your interest, motherly love,  
and concern. I have much in common with you.  
You were totally non-hearing since an early age  
and now my own hearing is almost gone.  
You were postmistress in the village.  
You helped me read and gave me  
all the good books. All through school you were  
my source of learning, study, and knowledge.  
We read each other's lips for knowledge,  
humor, and the village gossip. Thanks for being  
in my life and thanks for Tom Sawyer,  
Huck Finn, the discussions of the morals of Mark Twain,  
for the huge jigsaw puzzle  
spread across the living-room floor.  
Love,  
J. Lee, my Virginia name

Jim Wimer

## OLD MAN RIVER

“Old Man River” is a song that makes  
me shiver. It soothes  
my soul and makes me quiver.  
The flowing music is magical,  
like the flowing river water,  
splashing, filled with life.

The sun flashing,  
making reflections sparkle.  
Age-old trees capturing a glance  
of time, water lifting  
rocks with the power of song.  
“Old Man River” flowing along,  
a sweet song of life.

A. Faye Hicks

## **GOD**

Oh God, where have you been?  
I have missed you, oh God, I truly have  
in so many, many ways.  
First, I must ask you this—

God, do my mother and dad  
and big sister Joyce know that I have always  
loved them, that I have always  
given my true heart to them?

My mom was five feet, one inch tall  
and she gave her life to her two kids,  
Joyce and me. She always made me happy  
and I was, yes, a good little girl.  
Yes, Mom always made me feel like I was special.

Dad was a strong Hawaiian man  
and he loved Mom and Joyce and me.  
Dad was different from some men.  
He always made everything all right.  
We were alive and nothing could hurt us.

Then I fell in love and his name was Rudy.  
He died two years ago and I talk to him  
every night before I go to sleep.  
I know that Rudy is looking over me  
and I told him this:

*Rudy, I love you. I will always love you.  
Wait for me and someday we will  
be together again.*

Barbara Jamison

## THE EARTH'S LAMENT

This is my Body!  
I am the Waters! I give Life  
to your muscles, veins, and lungs!  
I bore You!  
I bear your Children!  
Dare You Defile Me!

I am sinew, I am gut!  
I am the marrow of Your bones!  
I will cradle those bones  
as I cradle the bones of  
All my Children!  
Dare You Murder My Children!

Crow! Eagle Fly! Fill the Sky  
with Tears of Dove  
And Rain Upon The Soul  
Of My Precious Child.  
Rain Upon The Soul Of Man.

Sharon Grace

## **LAISSEZ-FAIRE**

Life is unfair.  
Who's on first  
not Will Durst.  
Lay say fair  
Pickens fair.  
Who's in charge  
of the game?  
Rip Van Winkle  
Hall of Fame.  
The more things change  
they stay the same.  
Obama change  
familiar, strange.  
Reasonable plans  
within range.  
I believe he will achieve.  
Baroque Barak  
work in progress.  
Vision to see  
turn the page  
face new age.

Frank Ahern

## **I'M HOLDING**

What am I holding on to?

I'm holding on to this  
assignment.

The window I'm looking out of  
is the window of life.

Music, is it sweet or hard,  
strong or knowing?

Are we poor or are we rich?

We decide for ourselves.

Colleen Crawford

## THE MEN I ADMIRE

I try to be compassionate and kind,  
a college student trying to use my mind.

In all areas of life I try to be humble  
ran cross-country for four years,

never did quit or stumble.

Became familiar with the Bible, with a perfect

person called Christ, a love,  
the son of God existing to feel and heal

before rising above. From many stories  
began to admire a man, Moses was his name.

Lived for love against the devil,  
playing no game. Burdened by such a

worry-weight, used the Lord's magic  
until he felt lame. When his people needed a leader,

they would say *like, love Moses,*  
*he is a wonder, the same.*

The answer is old, repeated again and again,  
until it feels new.

Orin Smith

## MASQUERADE

Today is Purim,  
a Jewish holiday,  
a day to masquerade,  
a day for giving to the poor.

So, give raisins to a poet,  
give a heart to a heart.  
Bathe yourself in honey.

Bathe there, even if  
you're a plain poet laureate,  
even if you're a plain old Joe  
or yesterday's spoiled milk.

Mitchell Zeftel

## MY TOES' VOICES

my toes' voices  
    muted now  
fly up to my  
    electric mind  
almost ignored  
    in the furious  
hive of thoughts  
    a living dream  
of soft pillows  
    evaporates  
dangerous corridors  
    become  
deep dark caves  
    this too will pass  
outsiders!  
    there's a person  
in here  
    invalid doesn't  
    mean in-valid

Elizabeth Cutler

## **OUR SENSES**

Quiet is such a good thing.  
It makes you use your senses.  
It makes you explore with your eyes  
and see what is surrounding you.  
You may not like  
what is surrounding you,  
but vision is wonderful for those who use it.  
Sound can be the sounds of places  
that take you all over the world.  
Why is sound so magical—  
the sound of a choir  
or the sound of things around you.  
When time has run out of sounds  
we are quiet once again  
and the sound of quiet  
is again soaring among us.

Denise Perlman

**MAKE ME A MIRACLE**

## **THIS IS THE YEAR**

This is the year when we all respect  
and value each other.

The younger generation respects themselves  
and the older generation.

The older generation respects the younger ones.

This is the year when we respect  
and value ourselves.

This is the year when there are scientific  
and medical breakthroughs.

This is the year when I write  
that great American novel.

This is the year I learn Spanish.

This is the year that I dream good dreams  
that become real

like peace everywhere,

and people happy everywhere.

I imagine the six o'clock news today.

Peace and plenty broke out all over the world.

Shirley Middleton

## **BOUNCING BACK**

They ought to teach  
it in kindergarten  
with refresher classes later on.

They ought to tell us  
that we will fail often,  
sometimes in

    small ways,  
    sometimes big.

Bounce, bounce, bounce.

Rockets on the wrong  
course don't give up.

They just keep correcting  
themselves,

bouncing back and up  
as well.

Elizabeth Cutler

## **BREAKFAST AT OBAMA'S**

Give us this throne of opportunity.

Let us reinvent tradition.

Let our children treat eagles as pets.

Let all eagle eggs be colorless.

Let us say,

let us say.

Let our maids and domestics

burst out of the bedrooms.

Let us say.

Mitchell Zeffel

## CHRISTMAS TIME

I shall always remember how beautiful it was in my house at Christmas. My mom, my dad, my sister, Joyce, were there. Oh yes, I was happy and not a thing would ever hurt or bother me. I was 29 years old then and David, my son, was very young. Yes, Christmas was here and I loved it. My life was my son and I made sure that he would always be happy. Yes, the Christmas tree was real and we strung lights on it. Santa was soon to come so I told David to go to sleep and when he woke up there would be a surprise for him. Yes, it was now morning time and Santa did come and left David so very many presents under the tree. Yes, Christmas was special, not only because my birthday was Christmas Eve, but because life was so very beautiful in so many different ways. I had David and my health, and my world was complete. What a wonderful world it is.

Barbara Jamison

I believe that bread  
is for everyone good.  
As I look into the eyes  
of my once starving children  
I believe.

I believe that beauty is for everyone.  
As I gaze on the pink rose face  
of the carnation that was  
given to me on Mother's Day,  
Womens' Day, Ladies' Day, (to quote  
Ms. Shirley Middleton),  
I am sure that beauty  
is the birthright of everyone good.

Gloria, channeled by Sharon Grace

## THE MAGIC OF MUSIC

I love music, listen in peace every day.  
With compassion, I celebrate sound so I say.

My favorite groups, I know by name.  
Everyone is different, glad, grateful

they are not the same. New Order takes  
a powerful position, a great groove,

I am not playing a game. Tears for Fears,  
a rhyme of reason, a superb sound,

deep, lovely lyrics, you can hear in any season.  
The Church name speaks for itself every time,

perfect for a servant of God, the savior,  
or even Satan, the misbehavior.

Orchestral Maneuvers in the Dark,  
do not despair, there is a spark.

A sensational sound delivered by OMD,  
just listen and you will see.

At the end of my list, my personal messiah,  
Bob Marley, sings a song of the spirit,

sweet salvation for you and me. We will not  
deny our Creator or his Son's sacrifice for all humanity.

Orin Smith

## **MAKE ME A MIRACLE**

Make me a ready-made miracle.

I am Jesus, a sailor.

When all else fails, give.

Make me a miracle.

I need a miracle.

I need a beautiful lady,

love, pleasure.

Make me a miracle

of a sunny day.

When all else fails,

make me a miracle

of peace on Earth.

Make me a miracle.

Let in wings of a dream.

Paul Hoskinson

## THE WORLD IS A PLACE

The world is a place.

I'm thinking of all the wonders I see.

The world seen as a child,

next as a bride,

then as a grandmother

who is trying to see the world

as it was then and now.

Colleen Crawford

## LINGUISTIC LINGO SHTIK

Talking shtik

walking stick

fantastic stick.

Lighthouse light

works just right

day or night

audible sight.

Tapered stick

taps that floor.

Functions aloud

joins the crowd

makes me proud.

Tapered cane

folds up neat

gives me joy

a functional treat.

Walking cane

keeps me sane.

Ball at base

sweeps the floor.

Taps out loud  
clears the crowd.  
Light for blind  
amazing find.

Walking stick  
lighthouse stick  
personal shtik.  
Taps out loud  
makes me proud.  
Power design  
works just fine.  
Walking, talking  
lingo shtik.

Frank Ahern

## MY YOUNG WORLD

He was a lonely, solo boy  
born in the mountains of Virginia—  
always wanted a brother or sister for company.  
The animals and birds and trees in the village  
filled in for friends.

He started writing music  
when he was about seven and began  
to notice the colors in trees, birds,  
attempted to copy all things  
in the papers that a neighborhood woman  
gave to him. She was a great source  
of inspiration to him—

encouraged him to write about  
almost everything he encountered.  
She was totally deaf and encouraged him  
in his music, told him  
about the great composers she heard  
when she was young.

Although she could not hear physically,  
she heard inside—  
a technique he learned, then taught  
when he became a musician,  
especially when he began to teach  
at a well know school in New York City,  
a technique he continues to use into  
the present even though his hearing  
is being lost.

Jim Wimer

## HAIKU

Hospital of fun  
therapy on my funny bone  
a laugh a minute

Point of view  
used to have one  
it's here somewhere

Devastating strokes  
change the rules  
of the game I'm playing

Creativity  
self expression  
go for it

Poignancy  
is in the brain  
of the listener

Paul Hendrickson

## ***E* MEANING EVER**

*E* begins with everyone and everything.

If we didn't think of the best  
of everything

we wouldn't have dreams.

Without dreams, where would

our experiences take us?

Without experiences, where would we be?

Denise Perlman

## HAPPINESS

Happiness, happiness is the joy of life,  
but I have found it!

Happiness, happiness is the beauty of life,  
but I cannot contain it—

the beauty of flowers growing,  
the beauty of rivers roaring.

Happiness is the joy of life  
and I shall forever seek it—

seeking the moonlight  
while boating on the river,  
seeking the sunrise  
while the flowers bloom.

Happiness, happiness is the joy of life  
and will be my salvation.

A. Faye Hicks

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Frank Ahern** is currently inspired by neurology and linguistics and is reading Geoff Nunberg's *The Art of Speaking Dangerously*. Frank is blind as a result of a traumatic brain injury. He is from Limerick, Ireland.

**Colleen Crawford** was born and raised in Calumet, IL and came to San Francisco at the age of 20. She has worked as a farm laborer in Salinas and as a punch press operator. Colleen loves poetry and never imagined how positively it would affect her life.

**Elizabeth Cutler** has written advertising copy on both coasts. She has also answered phones for a sex information hotline and polished bits of meteorites with diamond dust. She has expressed herself through comic improvisation and amateur dramatics. She is the current president of the Laguna Honda Residents Council.

**Sharon Grace** is an animal rights activist. She is a poet, singer-songwriter, and painter. In her heart she hears the voices of those who are unheard and tries to give voice to them.

**Paul Hendrickson** was born in Massachusetts and is a regular contributor to *The Insider*. He continues to enjoy his computer and make short movies, trying to uncover the foibles of the self. He believes that everyone has a voice and just needs to find it.

**A. Faye Hicks** was the 2003 Po' Poet Laureate chosen by *POOR* magazine. Her first chapbook is *Poor Nation*. Her work has appeared in *The Other Side of the Postcard*, *Street Spirit*, and *The Insider*, and this is her fourth appearance in *Kaleidoscope*.

**Paul Hoskinson** was born in San Francisco and has traveled to the Hawaiian Islands, Guam, and Mexico. He is a poet and a painter.

**Barbara Jamison's** father was born in Honolulu, Hawaii and at the age of 17 her uncle sent her to Hawaii for two years. She learned the hula and continues to enjoy the sunsets and water of Hawaii.

**Shirley Middleton** was born in Mt. Vernon, NY, as was Art Carney, Dick Clark, and E.B. White. She was a third grade teacher in the U.S. Virgin Islands for six years. She has always enjoyed writing and is now exploring other artistic endeavors such as painting and drawing. This year she sold her first painting.

**Denise Perlman** grew up in New York and attended Southampton College. She has taught in Tucson and San Francisco and continues to use her writing skills for *The Insider*

and to write poems in the poetry group.

**Orin Smith** was raised in Santa Monica. He has been writing for three years and writes poetry and short stories. He is also very interested in religion.

**Jim Wimer** started writing sketches for a book at age eight. He has always written "in his mind," mostly science fiction. He describes himself as patient and as a person who is making progress.

**Mitchell Zeffel** arrived in San Francisco in 1968 and attended UC Berkeley's graduate sociology program. He discovered the world of poetry and poetry readings and took classes at community colleges. He also had plays produced at the Jean Shelton school. His poems have appeared in *Street Spirit* and *The Insider*.

## NOTES

The poem title, "At the Still Point of the Turning World," is taken from T. S. Eliot.

*"La Vida or Life": alabanza (praise), sonrisas (smiles)*

The untitled poem beginning: *I believe that bread* is a poem by a woman in Africa with whom Sharon Grace is in spiritual contact. The woman calls herself *Gloria*. She is the mother of five children. Gloria experiences all the good things that Sharon experiences, hence the pink rose face of the carnation on Mother's Day.

