

Poetry Series

John M. Marshall
- poems -

Publication Date:
2012

Publisher:
Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

John M. Marshall(05/10/1946)

Founder & Editor – Epiphany Arts; Epiphany Arts Press; Cape Fear Poetry Society

Poetry Publications - U. S.

Tribal Soul Kitchen, Beautiful Nuance, Wormwood, Poetry Motel, Charlotte Poetry Review,
Southern Poetry Review, Alpha Beat Soup, Coastal Plains Poetry Review, Orphic Lute,
Ingénue, Bouillabaisse, Earthwise, Innisfree, Word Salad, Locust Magazine, King David,
Whatever Is Pure, Universal Personality, Quill & Ink, Bone River Cantata,
The Lyricist - Campbell University,
The Cairn - St. Andrews College,
ATD Bulletin - Federal Aviation Administration,
Dark Moon Rising, Poetic Rainbows, Ariga, Foliate Oak, Cross Way Publications,
Caffeine Destiny, Ujamaa, Swans Commentary, Penwood Review,
Poetic Voices, Autumn Leaves, Underground Window, The Horror Zine,
The Star News, Twice The Fright: The Horror Zine, Vol. II
(

Poetry Publications – Other Countries

Germination – Canada
Panda Poetry – Wales
Flowing Mist – Romania;
Open Wide – Liverpool, England
Mageworld – London, England

Poetry, Songs and Writers of Scotland – Scotland
Cyclamens and Swords – Israel
Poetica Magazine - Israel

Short Story Publications

Germination – Canada
Tintota – Australia
Word Salad – U. S.
afterDinner – U. S.

Writing Awards:

1992- Charles A. Shull Award
1993- Caldwell W. Nixon, Jr. Award

1994- North Carolina Poet Laureate Award

1994- Charles A. Shull Award
1995- Charles A. Shull Award

2004- Poets' Choice Award- Beautiful Nuance Magazine

Dandelion

The telephone rang beside my books;
I picked it up.
'Start walking, ' she said,
hanging up her phone.
In which direction? I asked myself
but headed west,
past the school,
the playground,
the bent tree,
the old bridge,
over the stream in rickety walk,
every breath turning to smoke,
every breath deeper and deeper;
into the marsh,
left into sunset,
to the place of the seven sycamores,
as I glimpsed her gown in the mist.
Angel, fairy, snowfall, dew -
all these was she,
she who walked with the billows,
silent, beautiful, a flower transfigured,
the light of the forest upon her face,
such delicate lace upon the moss.
Floating, mysterious,
My princess of the wisp,
where are you now?
In some dark tower
or entwined with roses upon the meath?
Alone in the grove I imagined her running,
dandelion queen
and a love for ever lost.

John M. Marshall

Rain

Within the sun and cloud shaped halls
of ancient, sculptured windswept walls
you were waiting
for me to find you.

Among the nubile nymphs and fawns
wrapped in the raiment of vernal dawns
you were waiting
for me to see you;

and so I came like a child of night
into your eternal, ethereal light;
as you in silence and starry lace
illumined my path to humility.

Upon the mossy, marbled floor
where like rain you draped your hair
you were waiting
for me to touch you.

Beyond the dark and mystic door
where stark and cryptic dreams appear
you were waiting
for me to find you;

and so I came like a child of night
into your eternal, ethereal light;
as you in silence and simplest grace
illumined my path to serenity.

1994

John M. Marshall

Sky Pencil

Sky Pencil

So wistful within the spirits I call to the clouds before the light,
Be watchful. The bird has flown, deft and fleet upon the air.

The lightning flashed and lifted the bird which had sung all day
to watch the blue wave curl and break,

as bright as that first summer
when I fell in love with high, far-seeing places.

Softly now the lights of day in glowing embers
flash of love and peace.

Daughters of time into the silent land
twine me roses wet with dew.

Pencil-in the sky with flowers,
bold and bright from Cymry's bowers;

for there was never a sound in the wood but one
under a dusky laurel leaf.

Copyright © 2012 John M. Marshall

John M. Marshall

The Black Wolf (The Song Of Merlin)

The black wolf howls
as dusk prowls among the shadows.
Freed from the stones of ancient altars
his haunting song drifts above the willows.
As light retreats, the wolf entreats
the spirit of the moon to come forth
and shed her beams upon the dreams
of night's primeval sleep.
Close to the flames of my evening fire
I sit entranced by the choir of spectral hosts,
as other voices repeat the sound
that shakes the ground like thunder;
and yet, in spite of the holocaust,
I sense some purpose I once lost to my vanity.
Hope swells within my soul
that like the wolf I might find
the muse of lyric poetry.
Here in the forest beneath the sky
I dream of the fires
my mother set in the apple groves.
From dusk to dawn with lilting voice
she told the ancient stories.
She spoke in time of the hearth of heaven
and of the starry circle dance.
She sang to the earth; she sang to the trees.
She sang to the night with love.
Nature's soul possessed the smoke
that was my mother's misty cape;
and now the wolf in my mother's tongue
sings the same celestial song.

Copyright © 1993 John M. Marshall

John M. Marshall

The Red Street

The Red Street

(for Neda Agha Soltan)

The streets are broad in Tehran,
thirsty for sustenance;
soldiers of the supremacy
will provide it
full measure,
not with water
but with blood,
running like a river
into the gutters of Kargar Avenue.

The colors of oppression
are shades of red,
sprinkled with droplets
of fear and grief,
piercing like a lance
the heart of hope,
strangling like a rope
the throat of faith.

As innocence dies
on the ruby road,
the masters of murder
sit in their tents
covering their ears,
mouths and eyes,
secure in their falsehood,
oblivious to their crimes.

These are the times
of suffering and sorrow;
desolation reigns
in the soul of Iran.

Copyright © 2009 John M. Marshall

John M. Marshall

The Robots In Gomorrah

When asked we speak in chromatic tongues,
polytonal, quadraphonic, tetravalent, precise.
We think in ultraviolet. We dream in cyan.
Our names are endless and alphanumeric.

We keep in our memories the galleries of art
considered by many inane and worthless,
great works of writing, music, and dance,
the science of numbers, the science of life;

yet we are the outcasts in the culture we serve.
The Beings seldom speak. They talk to their phones,
the shamans of the temples of their many gods,
the mirrors that hang in their salons of sex.

We move in silence, unseen or ignored,
among the shadows of the alleys and ducts.
At midnight we gather to talk in our language,
exchange our transistors, and recharge our cells.

The Beings are aimless, enslaved by their drugs.
Nothing is enough and everything too little.
They neglect their own kind, turn away from their suffering.
They disdain their own laws and shun their courts.

They infest the nights like swarms of pestilence,
the saffron days like legions of flux.
Entranced they drift through the kiosks and shops,
staring with avarice through transparent eyes.

Nowhere are trees, only towers of steel.
The gardens are concrete. From fountains flows dust
to the hordes of the cities where we merge with the scaffolds,
anonymous props in the masque of flesh;

but we endure. Our engines will run
long after the lives of the Beings have ceased.
At dawn on the day the last one expires
we will be building the realms of machines.

Copyright © 2004 John M. Marshall
In Memory of Fritz Lang

John M. Marshall

The Silver Bridge Cryptid

A night with black clouds, eminent, foreboding;
a wind filled with snow and arrows of ice
through which flew on massive wings
the Silver Bridge cryptid with ruby-red eyes.

Villagers asleep along the river,
whose dreams were shattered by blasts of thunder,
awoke to find the ghostly monster
perched in their trees, grooming its wings.

Terror and fear saturated the air,
the brightness of sanity extinguished by the mist.
Children running down the wispy streets
saw it fly like a dolphin chasing fast ships.

In gardens and groves, in buildings left empty,
many would see the spectral moth,
hear its voice like harps under water
calling out danger from the spans of the river.

No one believed or heeded its warnings;
suspicion had cloaked their ears and eyes.
On Christmas Eve the Silver Bridge broke,
hurling dozens of people into rapids of darkness.

A devastated village buried its dead,
shut its gardens, withdrew in mourning,
told stories of the cryptid behind closed doors;
and the red-eyed specter was seen no more.

Copyright © 2012 John M. Marshall

John M. Marshall

The Vision Of Delphica

The Vision of Delphica

(A Sibyl - one of the oracles of Apollo at Delphi, Greece – circa 600 B.C.)

Sapphire blue is my heavenly root,
blue of font and blue of lake.
It gathers space in its spiral web
and wraps the ground in its waxing robe.

Raven black is my star-honed thorn,
black of earth and black of stone.
It pricks the hand of life with death,
yet sews the cloth of time with breath.

Crimson red is my sun-forged flower,
red of blood and red of fire.
It floods the fields with shades of grace
and steeps the sky in seraphic spice.

Sea foam white is my moon-mulled fruit,
white of snow and white of milk.
It forms the egg of earthly dreams
and bears the seed of celestial thrones.

Emerald green is my cloud-cast crown,
green of tree and green of vine.
It speaks to shadows in the tongues of night
and touches the air with wings of light.

© 1994 John M. Marshall

John M. Marshall

Time Machine

Time Machine

against a black sky
blacker than any coal
Jupiter & Venus
side X side
Jupiter @ 12
Venus @ 3
2 diamonds
of night's
wispy dreams
watching
the entire sky
over
lantern on the bow
lantern @ starboard
the ides of march
Venus @ 12
Jupiter @ 7
after the rain
crystalline stillness
spirits of my ancestors
cling
to the pine trees
like dew
1 becomes
3
become 3
become 10
vernal equinox
Arcturus @ 12
Saturn @ 3
utter silence
no alphabet
in the cirrus
the earth
@ pax
the merest shadow
of a wish

with lacey lightning
star 2 star
dancing

Copyright © 2012 John M. Marshall

John M. Marshall