

Seattle City Council

Culture, Civil Rights, Health and Personnel Committee Meeting

2:00 p.m. Wednesday, February 11th, 2009

Words' Worth

The Poetry Program of the Seattle City Council

Curated by **Donna Miscolta**

Today's poet is **Laurie Blauner**

Laurie Blauner is the author of six books of poetry and two novels. She received an MFA from The University of Montana. Her poetry and fiction have appeared in various publications, including *The New Republic*, *The Nation*, *The Georgia Review*, *The Seattle Review*, *The New Orleans Review*, *Poetry*, and *American Poetry Review*. She has received an NEA grant, as well as grants and awards from King County Arts Commission, Seattle Arts Commission, Artist Trust, and Centrum. She lives in Seattle.

The Emperor's Wife

by Laurie Blauner

Belief is everything. Yet I can't describe
his new clothes, pornographic as the wind's touch,
the pale, abandoned ship of his body, empty,
empty as the suggestion of smiles and vows. The
whispering fills my head, light in the terrible room
where we tried unsuccessfully to make children. I
gathered the wreck of him in my arms. Now air
rests its hand against his rough thigh. He is
laughing, waving. The all of him. He is happy
in his strange fidelity of blood swerving around,
avoiding his floating heart, his political games,
the innocence of good food. Moths swarm
in the faces of bystanders who know there is nothing
between them except their acquiescence, the sound of
their breath, their grins loosened like kites.
I too take risks. Not the sun pushing my garments
aside with its warm, broken kisses, my hair uprooted
by a breeze. But the way I stay, watching him caress
the world in its pure nakedness, knowing I
can't stop him from walking out that door.
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