

"Words' Worth" Poetry Readings

Poets at the Culture, Arts, and Parks Committee of the Seattle City Council.

A Gift by Rod Tipton

I have brought you the present
of velvet soft air on a warm day
after a night of rain

with it two women running
down the path the one in white
shorts whose name is Linda
(that means beautiful
in Spanish)

daydreaming about dipped
ice-cream the thought of which
only makes her want to sweat more

also a dog on a leash
who pulls ten miles an hour faster
than his owner can walk

and the birds with a breeze
under their wings barrel-rolling
through clouds of insects

free and clear of the ground
for what right now seems like
the rest of eternity

the day belongs much more
to them than me but still
it is my gift to you

so what will you do with
the mountains of yellow
wrapping paper?

and how will you unfold
this huge box?

I have seen your fingers pause
on such occasions your eyes
narrowing with clever questions

but if you will take good advice
as everyone should
you will not allow your new wealth

to slip away without holding
it in your arms and putting
its taste on your lips

Bar Music by Rod Tipton

something charming
on the piano

a rolling tune
to make you think
of a small circus

a slender woman
on the rope

agile, balanced

wraps her leg
like a snake

and hangs
in arched glory
at a dangerous height

then snaps and twists
and lowers herself

uncurling her body
onto the stool
next to yours

ÒbravoÓ you shout
and quickly check
your wallet

hoping you have enough
to buy her a drink

Unlocks Nothing by Rod Tipton

why are his fingers
so busy with keys
when he locks and
unlocks nothing

there were proud horses
in the street or maybe
just children dressed
that way

pawing and stamping
at the beginning
of a festival

I know you were there
I saw the tear
when they released
billows of flowers
and everyone cheered

and I heard your voice
too raised high
among the clapping hands
clear like a mocking bird
suddenly free of its cage

there were great freedoms
past out by vendors that day
and believe me some
are still good

but he turns off the light
blocks out the sun
and stays in the back

where he keeps
a small file with
square inches of paper
on which he inscribes
the initials of people
he can make owe

This page was last updated: May 27, 2003