

# Bay Leaves

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Prize-Winning Poems  
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The Poetry Council, founded in 1949, promotes annual contests and secures notable writers and teachers as judges. Until 1997, meetings of the Council were held in Asheville. In that year, the Council established an official relationship with Catawba College in Salisbury as a permanent repository for PCNC materials and as a regular meeting place each October to celebrate Poetry Day, which is sponsored by the Council. The Council does not have a general membership.

## DEDICATION

**K**atherine Russell Barnes became a board member of the Poetry Council of North Carolina in 1997 as co-editor of *Bay Leaves* and currently serves as category chairman of the Gladys Owings Hughes Heritage Award. She has been a member of the North Carolina Poetry Society for more than twenty-five years and currently assists with the down east meeting, Walking Into April, held annually at the Sam and Marjorie Ragan Writing Center at Barton College. She was a charter member of the NC Haiku Society at its inception in 1979 and is a member of the North Carolina Writers' Conference. She has participated in writing seminars led by such notables as Judson Jerome and Fred Chappell and has carried her knowledge and experience into the classroom to conduct workshops in public schools, as well as the School for the Deaf in Wilson.

A native of Nash County, Katie graduated from the Parkview Hospital School of Nursing in Rocky Mount. In 1952, she married Alton Barnes, also of Nash County and they soon moved to Wilson where they still reside. They have three children, Rebecca Tighe, Joseph Barnes, and Russell Barnes and six grandchildren. Katie has been active in community affairs and the Presbyterian Church, participating in the choir, holding various offices, and performing services tirelessly. For several years, she hosted a writers' group during off hours at her business office. On occasion, she opened her home to poet friends in crisis, providing unconditional support and guidance.

Katie describes herself as "a nurse by profession and a writer by compulsion" with "a continuing love/hate affair with words." For over thirty years, she has been angling for just the right word with much success. Her first poetry submission was accepted by *Crucible*, the beginning of an impressive list of credits. Her poems have been published in many journals, including *Cairn*, *Pembroke Magazine*, *The Lyricist*,

*Piedmont Literary Review*, *Icarus*, *Old Hickory Review*, and *Gihon River Review*. She has won awards in the annual contests of the North Carolina Poetry Society and the Poetry Council of North Carolina. Anthologies and collections including her work are *Weymouth*, *Here's to the Land*, *I Have Walked*, *Earth and Soul*, and *Poets for Peace*. Her poems appear on several Web sites, as well. Most recently, her poem "Another Lullaby" was selected for the printed program of the Lyric Recovery Festival presented at Carnegie Hall, March 22, 2004. Her collection entitled *Life Work* is forthcoming from the press In His Steps.

Katie's poetry draws on the complex nature of relationships—the physical, the spiritual, the humorous—never shying away from the current or the controversial. Her characters are born from keen observation and thoughtful analysis, even in settings as unlikely as breakfast at McDonald's. She writes a poem the way she cultivates her flower garden, working the soil to make it fertile, then gleaning wildflowers from the roadside and interspersing them among hothouse beauties. She waters, weeds and watches, rearranging as necessary for growth and esthetics. When the bloom is full, she invites friends to gather bouquets or dig pass-along plants for their own gardens. Her flowers and words abound.

We are grateful to her for the time and effort she has generously afforded the NC poetry organizations. We appreciate her contributions to promote and foster a love of the language and to share her wit and wisdom. We recognize her courage and persistence in the face of recent physical limitations. She passes along to us her unwavering vision and uncommon insight.

**T**o our friend and colleague, we dedicate the 2004 edition of *Bay Leaves*.

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Rebecca J. Mitchell  
On behalf of the Board of Directors  
&  
President, Janice L. Sullivan

October 2, 2004

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## JUDGES

**Oscar Arnold Young Contest for Book:** Carol Frost is writer in residence at Hartwick College, where she directs the Catskill Poetry Workshop. Her latest poetry collection from Northwestern University Press, *I Will Say Beauty*, was published in February 2003.

**Charles Shull Contest for Traditional Poetry:** Ryan G. Van Cleave is the author of four poetry collections, the most recent of which is *Imagine the Dawn: The Civil War Sonnets* (Turning Point Press, 2005). He also is the editor of three textbooks and four poetry anthologies. He has taught creative writing at the Florida State University, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay; he currently lives in upstate South Carolina and teaches at Clemson University.

**James Larkin Pearson Contest for Free Verse:** Ruth Moose is a member of the creative writing faculty at UNC-CH. She has published 4 books of poetry; most recently, *Making the Bed* has gone into a second printing. She has published poems in *Southern Review*, *The Nation*, *Yankee* (2 awards), *Christian Century*, *New Virginia Review* and other places. She has had a MacDowell Fellowship, a NC Writers Fellowship, a Carl Sandburg Award and the Sam Ragan Award for Contributions to the Arts in North Carolina.

**Archibald Rutledge Contest for the Sonnet: David T. Manning,** a Pushcart nominee, was winner of the Poet Laureate Award of the North Carolina Poetry Society in 1996 and 1998. His most recent chapbook, *Out After Dark*, was published by Pudding House in 2003. He has been named winner of the 2004 Longleaf Press Chapbook competition for his manuscript, *The Ice-Carver*, forthcoming this September.

**Gladys Owings Hughes Heritage Contest for Free Verse:** Phebe Davidson, who has been recognized in *Literary South Carolina* as “one of the state’s most distinguished contemporary poets,” is the author of several books of poems, including her award winning manuscripts *The Plumage of Swans* and *A Note on Demographics* and, most recently, *Back to Square One, New & Selected Poems*. She teaches at the University of South Carolina Aiken where she holds the rank of Distin-

gished Professor of English as well as the G.L. Toole Chair in English. She is the founding editor of Palanquin Press.

**Charlotte Young Contest for Elementary and Middle School Students:** Maureen Ryan Griffin makes her home in Charlotte, NC, with her husband Richard, and their two children, Amanda and Dan. Her first book of poems *When the Leaves Are in the Water* is part of Sandstone Publishing's emerging poets series; and in 1995 and 2003, Maureen served as Blumenthal Reader for the North Carolina Writer's Network. She is a teacher of writing and offers workshops, as well as individual coaching and critiquing through her business, WordPlay. Her most recent chapbook, *This Scatter of Blossoms*, was selected for publication by *Main Street Rag* during its annual competition period. She is published in numerous literary journals and anthologies.

**Sam Ragan Carolina Connection Contest for High School and College Students:** Peggy Gambill, once native to Georgia, now lives in the Raleigh area. She has taught poetry workshops to middle and high school students. Her work may be found in *Voices International*, *River's Edge*, *Pegasus*, and *Cape Cod Review*. In 1997, Mount Olive Press published her first collection of poetry, *Patchwork*.

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OSCAR ARNOLD YOUNG

*First Place*

from *The Dark Takes Aim*

(Autumn House Press, Pittsburgh, 2003)

**The Dead**

The dead sift through us  
without flesh, bone, hair,  
or whatever else the stars concoct  
for us to touch.

Reaching for the velvet muzzle  
of a horse, their hands pass on through  
never feeling the warm breath in their palms.

Try catching wind as it runs over wheat  
leaving it in shocked repose.

Cruel—to see the one you love  
and realize neither tongue nor limb,  
desire an unattached shadow.

Dashing without thought against the day,  
we complain at the slightest wound.  
The dead drift by longing for a bruise.

*Julie Suk*  
*Charlotte, NC*

OSCAR ARNOLD YOUNG

*First Place*

**Firing Can Be Wild**

Once I was good with a gun,  
held the stock firm  
in the loll of my shoulder,  
relished the feel of the kick,  
the sure trajectory.

My aim hasn't changed,  
but I tell myself I'm more watchful  
in the same lush foolery.

Surprising, how one small bird  
can scatter a reverie of leaves.

**Biographical Note**

**Julie Suk** co-edited *Bear Crossings: An Anthology of North American Poets* (1978) with Anne Newman and Nancy Cooke Stone. Julie Suk's poems have appeared in such periodicals as *Georgia Review*; *Poetry*, which awarded her the Bess Hokin Award; and *Shenandoah*. In addition to *The Dark Takes Aim*, Suk is author of *The Angel of Obsession* (1992), winner of the Arkansas Poetry Award and the Roanoke-Chowan Poetry Award; *Heartwood* (1991); and *The Medicine Woman* (1980). She lives in Charlotte, North Carolina.

OSCAR ARNOLD YOUNG

*Second Place*

from *Our Lives Are Rivers*

(University Press of Florida, Gainesville, 2003)

**Making Room**

Chico takes advantage that nobody's around  
and jumps up on the couch he's not allowed,  
and potted gardenia drowsy above his head,  
the long bay window hovering with sun,

Chico takes the leap and turns and shifts  
on the creamy colored couch he's not allowed  
to find a shady spot to rest his head,  
to stretch his legs, to curl his tail around,

so much clutter scattered here and there,  
papers, books, sweaters, it's hard to squeeze  
a body in, to stretch out toes still dark  
with backyard dirt to take the perfect siesta now,

Pushing off in a pile down to the floor  
Neruda and Rumi and *How Does a Poem Mean*.

*Mark Smith-Soto*  
*Greensboro, NC*

OSCAR ARNOLD YOUNG

*Second Place*

**Timex**

Two weeks before his death at fifty and  
two weeks after his birthday at the beach  
my father gave me his watch, snapped it off  
his large freckled wrist and handed it over

without ceremony, which was like him,  
but young as I was I felt the warm weight  
of the gift, he was just sitting on the bed  
and said I want you to have this, no other word

of explanation, shoulders hunched in the brown  
bathrobe as always falling open, chestful  
of grey hair, swell of belly, hand extended  
like an ape's palm down holding the silver-

banded numberless face, almost impossible  
to read, especially in the bedroom shadow.

**Biographical Note**

**Mark Smith-Soto** is the author of two books and many scholarly articles, and his poetry has appeared in numerous publications. In addition to his first full-length collection of poetry, *Our Lives Are Rivers*, his chapbook *Green Mango Collage* won the Persephone Press Book Award (now the Mary Belle Campbell Poetry Book Publication Award) in 2000, and he was the winner of *Chiron Review's* Poetry Contest in 2000. Another collection, *Shafts*, won the North Carolina Writers Network 2001 Randall Jarrell/Harperprints Poetry Chapbook Competition. Smith-Soto, a resident of Greensboro, has conducted poetry workshops and served as editor of *International Poetry Review*.