

A journal for those looking to be published

Literary Hook

By Christine Swanberg

Author and Poet

Are you interested in an intellectually-challenging poetry journal? Do you enjoy a wide range of styles, content and technique? Do you relish a blend of writing by established as well as emerging poets? *Meridian Anthology of Contemporary Poetry* offers all of this—and more. Today, we will look at Volume V to see what it has to offer.

Meridian Anthology of Contemporary

Poetry is a full-length volume (131 pages) dedicated solely to poetry. Published in Boca Raton, Fla., by Phyllis Geller, editor and publisher, and Marilyn Krepf, literary editor, as well as other staff members, the anthology's design and cover immediately invite you to open it and see what's inside. It is perfect bound, with a color cover, and integrity of design throughout the journal.

A quick read through its pages reveals free verse at its best. Free verse is not a paragraph written vertically instead of horizontally. A serious contemporary poet will use, and sometimes even create, a

form that best suits the content and pacing of the poem. In *Meridian Anthology of Contemporary Poetry*, you will find more than "long, skinny poems." You will find well-crafted couplets, tercets and other stanza strategies, as well as terracing and interesting use of sculpted space around the poems.

The range of subject matter is broad and impressive as this is not a thematic issue. The poems are psychologically intriguing, artistic and political, as some of the titles imply: "Vase Before Me," "Asked the Daughter," "For times of war, song," "Flying Over Baghdad," "Laundry with Mahler" and "A Witness to Your Life." Poems such as "The Solar Eclipsing Poet" and "The Danger of Looking Out the Window When You Are a Poet" delve playfully into the mind of the poet.

For you poets out there, here is a delightful, playful poem written in short imperative sentences. I admire the poem's zesty verbs, its subtle use of consonance and alliteration, and its accessible extended metaphor.

"Flesh it Out," by Blaise Allen

Become a poet.
Begin every meal
with a consommé of ideas
followed with a fruit cup
of ripe revelations.
Never pass up a croissant
full of buttery consonance.
Always fall for cheesy lines.
Savor sweet nothings
Dripping full fat verbs.
Stew on the particulars.
Shake up sonnets.
Write odes to olives.
Nibble nouns.
Write languid lines.
to stimulate imagination.
Just before bed, eat
a morsel of moon pie.
Do not work out.
The heaviest weight you
should lift is an epigraph.
Become a connoisseur.
Slurp alphabet soup.
Eat your own words.
Always have a second serving.
Stare out the window.
Imbibe a perfect ending.
Just chew on it a while.

I highly recommend this journal for both poets who want to publish in a fine journal and for lovers of poetry who enjoy the strong, multi-layered experience good contemporary poetry can deliver. For more information about ordering a sample copy, subscribing or submitting, check out the Web page www.Meridiananthology.com. It's worth your time!

Christine Swanberg is a local author and poet who has written several books of poetry and formerly wrote a column called "The Writer's Garret" for this newspaper.