



## Patti Sirens

PATTI SIRENS is an ex-New York poet and punk rock musician turned surfer/kayaker. She comes from a family of mermaids, fishwives, net menders and bootleggers. Her poetry has won prizes in the Artists Embassy International Dancing Poetry Contest, the National Writer's Union Poetry Contest, and the Virginia Poetry Society Contest. Her first book of poetry, *ANTARTICA*, was published by Burning Bush Publications in 2000. She lives in Santa Cruz.

## BLUE SNAKES

*"What Horse are you Mother, with the Bit Marks on your Face"*  
— Patrice Vecchione

Your snake of blue smoke curling from your lips  
your lips curled back like a rabid dog about to bite

I was weaned too early mother  
you abandoned the litter

went to work in a factory to make soap and cakes  
you made soap from the skin of the sacrificed and  
dispossessed

you made sweets and cakes from my guardian angel's  
breath  
but wouldn't let me eat any

you made me eat soft boiled eggs  
and I couldn't leave the table

til I ate the watery white of the sky  
and sticky sun that melted in my bowl

you would not let me eat cheerios or lucky charms  
you let me drink the dregs of your coffee in the  
afternoon

I developed an addiction to speed and motion  
the blue snake is in my lungs mother

writing up my spine I wanted to shout it out of me  
but you cupped your hand over my mouth

I bit your fingers but could not  
speak above a whisper

I won a pony mother when I was nine  
you wouldn't let me keep it

I learned then there were things I loved  
and just couldn't keep

The sun of the eggs are melting my waxen heart  
that puddle on the floor is me mother

I wet the bed and now there is always a flood an ocean

no lover will sleep with me for fear of being drowned

there is a hole in me mother  
where the blue snake lives

I've become my father living only for the  
liquid sun that pools in his glass

my heart has become ice  
and the drink drips from the holes in my bones

I have no blood and my heart is a useless muscle  
my lungs a watery bellows

there's nothing that keeps mother everything spoils  
and spills to the tiles the sun the eggs

what you never knew mother was I had an abortion  
at twenty seven all my eggs wasted

I gave you lots of grief  
but no grandchildren

my caviar eggs spill out in cavalier words  
orange and salty some people will pay a lot of money

to eat them I'm a fish mother a scaly thing  
with eyes glazed over

I'm a fish mother still swimming  
in the upstream of your womb

## LEAVE ME THE NIGHT

Leave me in the star pollened  
jasmine nectared night  
coyote yipping at the planet spackled sky  
leave me under candled windows  
where love is being made  
where alley cats and lovers howl  
and dawn climbs onto the back of the world  
where raccoons turn the day  
over and over in their tiny hands  
washing it pure in the river  
leave me in tree tops to rock  
in the breeze of the passing comet  
its tail whipping starlight into froth and foam  
somewhere someone is watching the late late show  
or waiting in vain for their lover to come home  
I am listening for the drone of your engine  
cat creep of your foot fall down the alley  
crunching snails and rose hips  
your knuckles lightly tapping the door  
dawn outlines your body  
as you strip down to only skin  
and slide smooth as river water  
in between the sheets

I navigate every edge and curve of you  
touch the rough places where you were singed  
by comet trail  
fingers walking the forest  
that grows out of the mulch and loam  
of your wild places  
taste the sweetness of the nectar  
left by the bees that swarm around your heart  
this hangover of honey as our bodies take shape  
in first light  
the delight of your smile  
and the joy of how the darkness led you here  
like something hungry hunting and feral



## Bonnie Moore

BONNIE MOORE grew up in a small town near Ojai, California, majored in psychology at UCSC, and has lived in Santa Cruz for over 30 years. This is the first time her poems have appeared in print.

the facts of moonlight are uncertain  
not only what it hides and what  
it makes you think you see  
but how it changed on it's way  
what happened, the stories it wants to tell  
about the swoosh through stars and darkness  
the space debris and whatever time is  
and the stories it wants to forget long before  
it lands gleaming on the fence post or the  
polished floor



waiting for the round of applause  
whose absence stilted your life  
the life you pared down  
standing in one place, turning.

the brilliant possibilities  
of every moment stood in wait  
you watched their shimmer  
transfixed, unable to let a single one go

no road taken, nothing claimed  
every loss a regret and a sorrow  
and all those choices lined up dancing  
just for you

## Independent Voices: Literary Readings and Booksignings

**Santa Cruz Art League Theatre**  
526 Broadway, Santa Cruz

All Readings Free to the Public

**7:30 PM Monday, March 13th:**

**Dane Cervine**, 2006 winner of the \$1,000  
NWU7 Poetry Prize, reading from his new poetry  
book: *"What A Father Dreams"*

**Randy Peyser**, prose, *"Healing the Heart of the  
World: Harnessing the Power of Intention to  
Change Your Life and Your Planet"*

**7:30 PM Monday, April 10th:**

**Mel Bowen**, travel writing; *"Well Traveled,"*  
a collection of 32 years of his travel articles  
**Ellen Hart**, new poetry: *"Behind the Fog"*

**7:30 PM Monday, May 8th:**

**James Kruger**, fiction/history, novel; *"Welcome  
Are Lands"*

**Rufus Daigle**, poetry and art; *"The Mystic  
Sings"*

**For information, contact host**  
**T. Mike Walker, 831-425-5755**