

2015 Roger M. Jones Poetry Contest
Second Place: Allyson Williams

Forgetting

I keep the bottles in my basement;
most of them so full that if you shake them the tops pop off.
My greatest treasures, keeping me alive and
giving my old aching bones something to live for.
The good ones give me pleasure,
and the bad ones, pain:
a pain so thick that it encompasses my being into reliving that moment;
allowing the screams to tremble from my lips
and awaken the nightmares that linger deep within my soul.

Because my body cannot hold any more pain, I have decided to
release all of them,
every last bottle.
I carry them up the stairs, one by one, and out into the cool fall air.
I relive each one once more as I pop off the corks and throw them on the ground.
I laugh, wince, cry...cry tears of joy as all of those sour memories are
plucked off of my skin like a leech.
After I release the last one, I fall to the ground,
taking in the smell of the earth,
and the trees covered in leaves as red as blood.
I'm ready to reach for a bottle and then,
I stop.
Instead, allow the memory to soak in only skin deep before it escapes me.
"As it should be," I think to myself,
and laugh as I watch the sunset.

Prisms

Purple.

We laugh as mom pushes us high on the swings,
our braided hair falls onto our backs,
the lilacs woven in match the sea of flowers at our feet.
All of our colored eggs reside in baskets on the porch,
ready to be hidden.

We run to the house, cartwheeling as we go,
at the smell of sugar cookies and icing.
The birds constantly show-off their new tunes
while the butterflies dance by the trees.
The first sign of a bunny ensures the final close of winter.

Red.

Hot, flickering flames fill up the fireplace,
warming the room from the dark, cold night that lies outside.
Holly berries accent the wreath above the mantle.
The velvet stockings hang over the fire,
anticipating the stuffing of goodies.
We anxiously shake our presents that lie under the tree,
guessing what lies inside.
Gingerbread and cinnamon fill up the room as we decorate our cookies for Santa.
We tiptoe to bed and know we must
sleep if we want Him to come.

Blue.

Laying on our backs in the sand
we see the clear blue sky for miles and miles.
The splashing of cool water accompanies
the salt that reeks in the air.
Seagulls crowd the skies as they are
shooed away from the beach.
Large sailboats soar past, and kites shoot up in to the sky
as the breeze whizzes past.

The 84 Ivories

Dear Piano,

How do you always keep a perfect figure?
Your glossy black finish so smooth,
even with occasional scratches on your surface.
With your top cover raised, melodies escape,
that echo off the walls and fill the entire house.
We play together as my fingers dance across your ivory keys.
Our duet knows how to fill the smiles of all that listen,
and causes dancing and laughter up and down the halls.
Notes flutter up and down the treble clef staff,
ringing and singing in their own way.
Even after some of your notes become flat,
no one worries,
as you are as good as new after a tuning.
I wish all that is broken was as easy to fix as you are.

Sincerely,
Music Maker

Outside of Reach

A white picket fence surrounds a house.
The grass, so green, so perfectly mowed,
reflects the sun, glittering like a thousand diamonds.
Flowers cover the lawn, providing an array of colors
on top of green.
Birds chirp by feeders and marble baths,
trying to shoo away squirrels and rabbits.
An empty swing hangs from the porch,
it sways,
and rocks in the breeze.
The gate firmly stands, always locked;
We yearn to find the key.

Defining

I despise you;
loathe the way you walk across the hall,
your giant steps crushing everything in your path.
I hate the way you laugh a hearty
cackle that floods my ears with shrieks
and screams;
cringe when you grin, a heartless smile only
meant to put ache into my bones.

I love you;
mesmerized by your rhythm when you walk,
each step forming a distinct beat.
I laugh along with you, your words
causing me to let every worry escape me
while I chuckle;
they are the key to unlocking the door that
shows who you really are.