

Guide to the Collections

Note: the Guide is a work in progress. Longer descriptions have been written for a few, and a few more may be prepared for others in time.

Poems from the 1970's – The Evergreen State College, Bainbridge Island, Pullman

 10 Short Poems of Spring and A Song of Longing: In 1924, Pablo Neruda published *Viente Poemas de Amor y una Cancion Desperada* (Twenty Poems of Love and a Song of Despair), which I first read in a *Selected Poetry of Pablo Neruda* picked up 50 years later from The Evergreen State College bookstore. This collection responds with a variation, being styled short and set in spring (but of course are also love poems). Read the accompanying “A Deeper Look” (link on Works page) for more.

 A Rainy Spring: The Evergreen State College: In the spring of 1974 I moved from an apartment shared with friends who had also come down to Evergreen from Bainbridge High School, to a windowless room I rented from a tortured student of Russian literature, to whom several of these poems are dedicated. It was a challenging and sometimes confusing year, when I attended the Power and Personal Vulnerability program at Evergreen. Some of the poems are written to or for other students in the program; a few are dedicated to a young woman who was, sadly, already in a committed relationship; and one to a woman who ran the Olympia Crisis Clinic telephone crisis intervention program, where I volunteered that spring. Many of these poems were much reworked over the following 20 years. Some are written in a surrealist voice and are as “avant garde” as anything I ever wrote – something I suppose every young poet tries out. Many evoke the states of mind of the time. As such, they can't be translated into concrete terms; their meaning lies in the collision and refraction of their imagery. Pauses at the end of lines are not always punctuated, while other lines are enjambed. A few lines or images repeat between entirely different poems, creating unexpected cross-linkages.

- ✚ Bullet Blues: the difficulties of constructing “who you are” in youth, sometimes with an ironic or even caustic tone
- ✚ Native Tongue: the sense that all we need of spirit is here in Nature and in the natural world around us – perhaps 20 years later this would be called “deep ecology”.
- ✚ Personal History: what is that goes into making up a person, a personality, a personal history? Presences and people that enter and shape a life.
- ✚ Soul: the reverse side of Bullet Blues, the Soul at work in being made, soul-making.
- ✚ The View from Kamiak: poems written in Pullman, during graduate school. Kamiak Butte was a favorite hike, alone, when the presence of the land could be felt.
- ✚ Vashon-Fauntleroy Ferry: living on Vashon the first time around, after leaving Evergreen in 1974 to work a year in downtown Seattle, saving up money to continue college.

Poems from the 1980’s and 1990’s – Sonoma, California

- ✚ Dancer: poems inspired by folk dance, capturing certain dance partners.
- ✚ Entering You Like a Night Woods: erotic poems.
- ✚ Hollyhocks: a cycle of short poems occasioned by the hollyhock garden planted by the poet’s mother, who loved the flower.
- ✚ Leave-Taking: a cycle of poems on death and divorce, dedicated to my first wife, Kate.
- ✚ Love in the Space of No Space: loves to which life gave no space to bloom beyond its their flowering.
- ✚ Love Poems to a Stranger: moments when love is afoot, loose in the world, but attached to no particular person.
- ✚ Old Europe: poems written during European travels.
- ✚ One Black Rock: poems written for a past partner. The opening poem, One Hundred White Stones was written for a wedding vow; the closing poem (for which the collection is named), marks the ending of that relationship.
- ✚ Railway Windows: snapshots taken from the windows of moving trains.

- ✚ Roses: Poems in Experimental Forms: an experiment inspired by Rilke.
- ✚ September Come Sonoma: diverse poems written over 16 years while living in Sonoma, California.
- ✚ Southeast Asia: poems written during travels in southeast Asia, mostly Indonesia.
- ✚ Temenos: Temenos was a study group convened by Gil Bailie in Sonoma, California, meeting throughout the 1980s and into the 1990's, primarily concerned with the Great Works of Western Civilization from a Jungian perspective, and with the Biblical tradition. These poems are responses to or crystallizations of what went on in some of those meetings.
- ✚ The One Traveling: poems on time and the changes wrought by time.
- ✚ Weight: spiritual poems regarding the relationship with God, in a Christian voice.
- ✚ Woman: a cycle of 24 poems from a somewhat Jungian perspective on a man's experience of woman as his anima, lover, sister, mother, partner and friend.

Poems from the 1990's and New Millenium – Sonoma, Vashon Island

- ✚ A Life Drifts Out on Puget Sound: the release into the present moment when life is no longer about the long disciplined labor toward ends, and relaxes into the end itself.
- ✚ Alchemy and the Holocaust: alchemical transformations and the holocausts with which we are threatened.
- ✚ Arthurian Tarot: poems in meditation upon the cards of the Arthurian tarot, incorporating Jungian and Grail traditions.
- ✚ Book of Dreams: poems taken from dreams.
- ✚ Dialogue with Evil: poems wrestling with the intrusion of evil in life.
- ✚ Haiku: poems in traditional haiku form and two additional syllabic forms.
- ✚ Human Nature: poems exploring facets of our nature, from pride through sorrow, greed, violence, and regret. A second compilation addressing the positives of human nature will come.

-  I Come Back on a Day That is Always Today: a collection that begins with the joy of being alive, as if one were given one day to come back to delight in life – how rare and precious it is to be alive, regardless of the inner or outer poverties must be struggled through.
-  In the Dark Midwinter: poems written during the darkest days of the year – an annual ritual.
-  Late Depending Branches: poems later in life, when branches are weighted with fruit and bend near to hand.
-  Little Brown Head, Little Blonde Head: poems about our children when they were little, and an appended collection of children's poems.
-  Luteinizing Harmonium: poems aslant, looking sideways with a sardonic twist, somewhat mirroring Bullet Blues at a later stage of life.
-  Mowing in Failing Light: poems from the period of family life and home-making, when children are raised and we fully mature.
-  Plays on Pound: two plays moving from Ezra Pound's incarceration in a military camp at the end of WWII through his incarceration at St. Elizabeth's asylum after his trial. An effort to restore poetry to the stage in a Shakespearian vein.
-  Puget Sound Country: poems continuing Native Tongue, to celebrate the grace and beauty of this landscape. (A few of the earlier poems are kept here to give this collection a center of gravity, until it is filled out with its own works.)
-  The Lucid Hallucinatorium: an exploration of a life in the fragments of the splintered mirror of memory.
-  The Poisoned Heart: the wretched moments when the inner life turns back on one, with knives.
-  Tonasket Cabin: poems written in a rustic cabin in the Okanogan Highlands.
-  Translations: translations of the Tao Te Ching, Goethe, and the Swedish poet, Hjalmar Gullberg.
-  Vashon Dharma: poems exploring Zen.
-  What Rises and What Stays: poems written over more than 30 years for my wife, Jennifer.

