

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Phoebe MacAdams: Three Poems

Phoebe MacAdams · Wednesday, November 8th, 2017

Phoebe MacAdams is the author of *The Large Economy of the Beautiful*, her seventh book of poetry. Her previous books include *Sunday*, Tombouctou Press (1983); *Ever*, Rose Valley Press (1985); *Ordinary Snake Dance*, Cahuenga Press (1994); *Livelihood*, Cahuenga Press (2003); *Strange Grace*, Cahuenga Press (2007) and *Touching Stone*, Cahuenga Press (2012).

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### Even Birds Are Complicated

*Listen and translate the blessed entanglements,*  
says a voice in my dream,  
like this green shawl, a gift from Roberta,  
or the red throated hummingbirds  
and the finches battling for food.

Will calls with news from Selkirk, New York,  
the old family house.  
He saw the barn wallboard  
where my grandfather measured  
the grandchildren each July fourth,  
where he saw his twin brother's ghost,  
and where he died.

This is about knots, words,  
even birds are complicated

but about the shawl: in March  
I walked into a room full of women knitting for God.  
Are there any rules? I asked.  
Three by five feet, they said, pray  
and then give it away.

from *Touching Stone*  
Cahuenga Press, 2012

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## The Large Economy of the Beautiful

I am wearing my birding hat  
and crazy paraphernalia:  
binos and bottles, little notebooks and pens  
as cars whiz by on Highway 1.  
Today I have learned about Syrinx, nymph  
beloved by Pan,  
also the throat muscle and cartilage of bird song.

The Black Skimmer moves along the top of the water  
trolling for fish;  
California Cormorants stand on the sand  
drying their wings.

willet, whimbrel,  
dowitcher and plover,  
yellow feet, red bills  
Great Blue and Snowy White  
At night the shapes of birds move differently:  
wings calling

us to rise from our daily difficulties  
and sing ourselves into form.

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## Under the Beauty of Kate

my sister watching over us  
through the tissue of reality,  
I sit here in the cold,  
grateful to remember promises:  
we care for each other  
on this side or the other.  
I take solace in family,  
in home and in  
the church of words.

*(Author photo by Alexis Rhone Fancher.)*

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