

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).

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

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.

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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