



ROME ART AND COMMUNITY CENTER  
308 West Bloomfield Street  
Rome, New York 13440

[www.romeart.org](http://www.romeart.org)

**Milton Dorfman Poetry Prize  
Awards Ceremony 2009**

# Milton Dorfman Poetry Prize Awards Ceremony 2009

## PROGRAM

SUNDAY, AUGUST 9, 2009

**2:00 PM**

Welcome & Introduction by  
Executive Director Lauren Marie Getek

Special Words from our Honored Guests

Awards & Reading by  
2009 Judge Carol Hoenig  
& 2009 award winners

Closing words from Mrs. Ava Dorfman

Light Reception in Dining Room

*Thank you for coming!*

Thank you for attending this special presentation, in which we celebrate the beauty and inspiration of the art of poetry.

Thank you to the following people who continue to support this contest:

The Dorfman Family  
Mayor James Brown  
Senator Joseph Griffo  
Former Senator Ray Meier  
The RACC Board of Trustees

And to each and every poet who entered this contest— without you we would not be here today, celebrating this special day.

Congratulations to all participants for a job well done!

And Congratulations to all of the 2009 honorees! Your words inspire us.

Please join us now in the Dining Room for a light lunch reception.

See you next year!

## NOVEMBER 9TH

*By Candace M. Paris*

Rains have left  
The ground a soggy mass.  
The grass is flat  
Leaves plastered in place and  
Trees nurse broken limbs.

We take this walk  
Four times a day  
My dog and I.  
Morning, noon, and twilight— then night  
I train against his pull,

Say not to squirrels  
Chipmunks and cats,  
All rhythms that call the wild.  
He pees against some weeds,  
His urge to chase goes unrelieved.

He wades and steps up rocks  
(A dam to hold the ditch's flow)  
And sniffs— a clot of mud?  
A bloated mound that sports— a paw.  
Wet-slicked belly, delicate nose,

The possum rests  
Seductive in repose  
Against the cradling rocks  
And water's pull,  
No longer cautious prey.

A few short sniffs  
His coat soaked through,  
My predator submits—  
We quit this grave  
Day's rhythm pulls us on toward home.

## ABOUT THE MILTON DORFMAN POETRY PRIZE

*Celebrating excellence in the art of poetry*

The Milton Dorfman Poetry Prize is an annual poetry contest that was established by Mrs. Ava Dorfman of Rome, NY, to honor the memory of her late husband, Dr. Milton Dorfman. This year, the contest became a regional contest, open to NYS residents only, to spotlight local talent and celebrate the poets in our great state.

The contest is sponsored, moderated, and hosted each year by Rome Art And Community Center with support from the Dorfman Family. Milton Dorfman was a long-standing patron of the arts and many community organizations, including RACC. Ava Dorfman continues the poetry prize each year as a living tribute to her husband, and affords poets statewide a chance to have their poetry reach the public, as well as celebrate the art of poetry.

This year's winners represent the best of the Empire State, with winners from Central New York and the Capitol District.

# Milton Dorfman Poetry Prize Awards Ceremony 2009

## AWARD HONOREES 2009

### FIRST PLACE

**Sharon T. DiLorenzo**

Clifton Park, NY

*"Soliloquy to Lawn Mowing"*

### SECOND PLACE

**Ruth Ann Dandrea**

Holland Patent, NY

*"Cow Poem"*

### THIRD PLACE

**Tom Stock**

Little Falls, NY

*"What is Sown"*

### HONORABLE MENTION

**Christian Parsons**

Rome, NY

*"La Chaise"*

**Kimberly Pflanzner**

Brantingham, NY

*"The Legend of the Mermaids of Eleuthera"*

**Candace M. Paris**

Clinton, NY

*"November 9th"*

Poseidon was thoughtful and he pondered this favor, a solution came to mind. "Send your winds to sink her ship and leave her for the Mermaids to find." "if they accept her into their home of the sea, they will make her one of them", "and a mortal she'll no longer be and the God's will let you wed then."

Aeolus did as Poseidon suggested and sent cold winds from the East, the storm raised the waves and Eria was lost to depths of the briny sea. The Island People grieved for Eria, her presence would truly be missed But the winds were strong and along with Eria's, also sank the Master's ship.

The Master himself and all his riches sank to the ocean floor, this selfish man was enslaved the people would bother them no more. The master's great fortune can still be found if you know how the ocean flows, Current Cut is where it's hidden, just follow where the Spotted Ray goes.

Today the Island is a happy place filled with hope and glee. It's been named Eleuthera after young Eria, the very name means free. The locals say she visits still and other Mermaids have joined, and from the master's shipwreck they will often bring a coin.

Many have thought of Aelous and Eria and whatever came to be. And many believe the answer lies in the Sea Anemone.. It lives off the shores in the deep blue sea in patches of purple and greens, translate the word and "Daughters of the Wind" is what anemone means.

She always has a kind word or deed for every person she met and never did she do a deed to see what she could get.

When word had spread that a wedding was planned and that Eria would be the Bride, the Island people devised a plan to help young Eria hide. "We'll launch a boat out to the sea and make him think she fled" "The master will follow to bring her back but we'll bring her back instead."

"The Master is a selfish man he'll not return till he finds her", "And we can all live in happiness on the Island without a Master." The plan was in motion and Eria set sail and the Master set sail in pursuit, He loaded his riches in the hold of his ship for he would not leave his loot.

All was well it was going as planned. They would soon send a ship out to Eria, but no one thought to consider at all that the Gods would have a different idea. It seemed that when Eria would stroll the beach every day at sunset, the God Aeolus would stroll alongside her and follow her every step.

Aeolus us the keeper of winds, it is he that keeps them blowing, and many times as Eria walked a breeze would send her hair flowing. He fell deeply in love with the mortal girl but knew she couldn't be his, for the Temple of the Gods are very strict and would no doubt frown upon this.

The day she set sail he saw his chance, he would speak to the Greek God Poseidon, and ask for his help in finding a way to change the mortal maiden. "Perhaps if you make her a mythical creature the Temple of Gods would agree to allow Eria and I to meet and for Eria to them be with me."



## SOLILOQUY TO LAWN MOWING

*By Sharon T. DiLorenzo*

The summer after my now ex-husband departed,  
The neighbors gathered in their wine-infused blogs  
And whispered not so quietly,  
"How WILL she manage?"

They arched their neatly manicured fingers back  
And sighed  
And said  
"he kept this lawn so perfectly."

They were right.

Every sunny Saturday, never before ten, always before  
five, his pattern emerged.  
Horizontal lines on the first and third.  
Vertical lines on the second and fourth.  
The bonus fifth Saturday?

Per-  
P  
E  
N  
Dicular

So, I set to prove them wrong!

On dates containing the number seven  
Or a multiple of seven,  
IF the sun was shining and  
IF the grass bent slightly over from its own weight,  
MY pattern emerged.

Sometimes straight and sometimes circular  
And once, an adventuresome  
Zig

Zag

Zig

Zag

With motors sputtering, I'd hum to myself as I jaunted  
along,

"a tisket, a tasket  
I'm not a mental basket

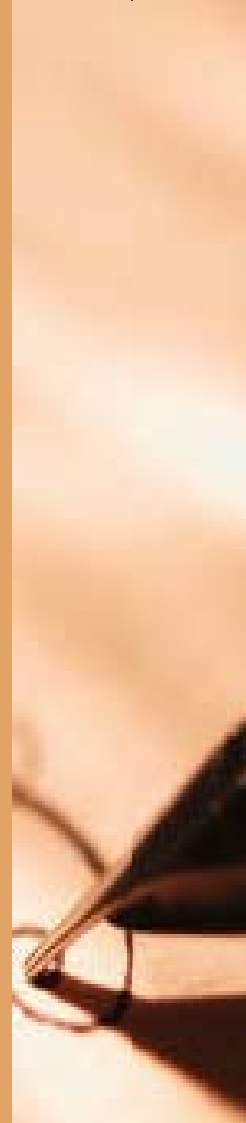
Ahem! I must say... it got me through the first summer.

## COW POEM

*By Ruth Ann Dandrea*

I keep thinking  
I don't know enough  
Will need to read  
Learn about cows  
Understand the processes  
See what slaughterhouses  
Look like smell  
Like feel like  
Have been paying  
Attention to cattle  
In the fields, green  
Around my house  
How they move  
Lifting the large  
Hip first forcing  
Themselves forward  
Like an old man  
Sore, worn, tired  
How you almost  
Never see one  
Run but when you  
Do it always  
Makes you smile  
Their varied patterns  
Color the fields  
Of our dreams  
I thought I'd have  
To visit a farm, barn  
Look into the soft  
Eye say the old  
Nursery rhyme How  
Now Brown Cow  
(when I was a child  
An ornery uncle  
Convinced me brown  
Cows gave chocolate milk.

I believed forever— wish  
to, even now.  
He had another story, too,  
about a little red  
Fox in blue booties  
Always on car rides—  
He never drove—  
Held on to the strap  
Above the door  
As if he were  
Riding the subway.)  
Must place my  
Palm on a warm  
Flank of cowhide  
Skin flickering under flies  
I must, I thought  
Live a cow's life  
Low a cow be  
A momentary bovine  
Before I'd warrant  
Means to write  
One's escape  
However did she do it?  
(I do not know but  
Feel the runaway  
Female, a girl really,  
Ready once  
Not to follow  
The swishing tale  
Of the one in front,  
Ready now  
To turn hoof  
And take off  
Across a countryside  
On her own,  
Ready finally  
To flee. Did she  
Taste the blood  
Of her herd  
On the breeze?



## THE LEGEND OF THE MERMAIDS OF ELEUTHERA *By Kimberly Pflanzner*

I'll tell you a story, a curious tale that takes place by the sea. I'll tell you about an Island surrounded by coral and how it came to be free. The Island of Eleuthera is lush and green where you can relax and play, but there was a time not long ago when things were not this way.

The ocean depths of azure and jade hide shipwrecks and treasures below. But Mermaids are hidden in the deep as well and all the locals know. The Mermaids now keep the island safe from storms that come its way, and at early dawn if the light is just right you can see them in the Bay.

“Mermaids aren't real they're just a myth” you may be thinking now, but listen to my tale— I'll tell you they're here and explain the why and how. The tale begins a long time ago. A story of love unrequited. It involves a young maiden and a selfish man who felt he was being slighted.

Her name was Eria she was kind and sweet, she possessed a beauty quite rare. But one fateful day while strolling the beach she interrupted the selfish man's stare. He was counting his money and stopped for a moment to look at the sea and sky, as he contemplated how rich he was it was then that Eria walked by.

“Who is that girl that strolls the beach?” he asked his servant Arthur. “Find out her name, to her father I'll speak and I won't take no for an answer.” Arthur's master was an unkind man, all who knew him feared him. The Island was not so much a home, but really more of a prison.

The Island people were practically slaves and life on the island was blue, Eria was really the only brightness the Island people knew.

## LA CHAISE

*By Christian Parsons*

Look at a chair.  
Tell me what you see.  
I'd guess that you'd see four legs,  
A slab parallel to the ground,  
And another, perpendicular to the first.  
You might mention the material  
Of which the chair is made-  
Wood, plastic, metal, whatever.  
Now look deeper  
And see the man who made the chair-  
In a factory assembly line  
Slapping parts together,  
Or in a dusty back room  
Filled with the nostalgic aroma  
Of old grease and rusted tools,  
Gently, lovingly carving the chair's  
Very fine details.  
Keep looking and see the man's family,  
The love of his life, and the fruit of his loins.  
He works so they may live.  
His chairs are food, shelter, and clothing.  
His chairs are meager vacations  
That no family member complains of  
Because he worked hard to earn it  
And their togetherness is what counts.  
Look at the chair and see the reality behind it.  
Understand that there's more than simply what we see.  
Understand that all of life is beautiful and sacred,  
But we must be thoughtful to appreciate it.  
We must see everything as  
In the process of being created,  
That nothing is finished,  
Nor will it be finished  
In our lifetimes, or lifetimes after.  
Look at the chair  
And see the ages of efforts and toils  
That have created it.  
See the chair as you see life; a gift of creation.



Did a slim shiver  
Slide down that  
Bony spine whispering  
go? It's your only  
Chance. Or was  
It merely wondering?  
An idea,  
A desire to change.  
The pattern of the fields  
Of her life?  
Maybe she was  
Too old to milk  
Had done her duty  
All her life  
And now instead  
Of a silky  
Pasture under  
Ancient apples  
Some farmer with  
A greedy dream  
Of beef sent  
Her along.)  
Like they sent  
Him, too, my old  
Uncle who no one  
Not even his daughter  
Would care for  
Sainted making another  
Where I guess he died  
I didn't know  
Him either only  
The furry fake rabbit  
From the discount  
Store I slept with  
That he bought

What's to understand  
Really do we ever  
Know another  
Creature? One

Day the cow  
Said no I  
I will not walk  
That trail just  
Because it's there  
I will take  
My large body  
Elsewhere and  
Just be and he  
Did as he chose  
His whole life  
Until the end  
When the only  
Path left was  
Alone though  
I like to think  
He died cantankerous  
Rather than afraid  
But I suppose  
I am wrong  
She wasn't, though  
Picked up on some  
Less traveled  
Long Island  
Byway the ones  
In charge said  
Free and made  
A place for her  
Sanctuary at some  
Animal refuge  
She grazes there  
Now a sunny  
Memorial Day  
Morning under  
A warming sun  
And white clouds  
That can't be  
Real while he  
Maybe h dances  
With bluefooted

Foxes guzzling  
Chocolate milk  
From some happy  
Udder petting  
The silk rabbits  
Of his tenure  
Here the old  
Elevator operator  
Who knew mafia  
Bosses and argued  
The iron hand  
Of my summertime  
Youth riding  
Cows rustling  
Stories out of steam.



## WHAT IS SOWN

*By Tom Stock*

Floating on the river, in a sun induced trance, the lone boater strains his ear. A phantom radio somewhere on the shore competes with the cicadas to be heard. "Don't Fear the Reaper" seems like easy advice coming from the oldies station. So easy on a summer day to sing along when mortality is academic and uninteresting.

On winter nights, when he visits he bedroom, humming that haunting tune while perched vulture like next to an insomniac TV, those blue sky summer day dreams are now miles away. The faint overly sweet smell of flowers hangs in the dark still air; these are not summer flowers.

His neutral nature is unhurried and not at all impatient. Time is one of his specialties. Cavalierly hanging at his side, his timepiece steadily and silently let's slip the measured grains of sand thru the narrow space in the glass we know as Today.

The razor scythe edge, ever ready to harvest. Will take wheat or weeds. His blank eyeless face cannot tell the difference, has no preference. What is sown is what is grown and will be taken, ripe or green.

The river traveler has to review the yield of his crop. It is what he planted and nurtured, or not. The fruits of a life's labor play like a surreal movie in the still of some nights. The observer weaves in and out of the plot while joy and sadness trade punches. What wins, what perseveres cannot be changed after a certain point. The Reaper, not to be feared but perhaps offering a lesson, will harvest what has been sown and will show remarkable indifference.