

**Poetry for Everyone:
A Noncompetitive Contest**

"The trouble with poetry," an unenlightened friend of mine once said, "is that it is only for poets." While he was wrong, he did echo the sentiments of many who believe that only those who know the difference between a simile and a metaphor can legally write poems.

The fact is if you want to call a set of directions for making zucchini-bagels poetry, no one can contradict you. This is probably the attraction of "free verse" to so many of today's poets. However, others want structure in their poetry, and this too is perfectly acceptable.

That is why, in an effort to promote poetry and maybe even a little structure, the Upper Left Edge is sponsoring a poetry contest. The contest is for a particular form of poem called "Diamante." If you don't know it, don't worry. This article will conclude with a short and easy lesson on Diamante writing.

There will be two divisions, student and adult, and several categories including best serious, best humorous, and best coast-related. The Upper Left Edge will print the winning entries in a later issue.

Keep copies of all poems as these will not be returned, and notification of winners will be through the Upper Left Edge. Judging will be done arbitrarily and capriciously by the Upper Left Edge staff.

There are no cash prizes, only the honor of being published. Even if your work is not selected for publication, think how impressive it will be to be able to say to your friends no matter what the topic of conversation is, "Why that reminds me of a Diamante I wrote the other day."

To enter, write your Diamante on a three by five card with your name and address on the back of the card. If you are a student, please include the name of your school and your grade level. You may enter as many as you like but only one per card. Address cards to: Upper Left Coast Productions/PO Box 1222/Cannon Beach, OR 97110.

Deadline for entries is October 31, 1995.

The Diamante does not worry about rhyme or rhythm. It is a word-count poem based on grammar and has only seven lines and a total of sixteen words. Here are the directions:

- First line -- a noun, the subject
- Second line -- two adjectives describing the subject
- Third line -- three participles describing the subject (Participles are verbs used as adjectives by adding "ing".)
- Fourth line -- four nouns, the first two related to the subject and the last two related to the final noun
- Fifth line -- three participles describing the final noun
- Sixth line -- two adjectives describing the final noun
- Seventh line -- a final noun that is, in some way, the opposite of the first noun

Examples:

Soccer
Rough Tough
Grunting Sweating Running
Spikes power Slacks patience
Strolling putting yawning
Dull Silly
Golf

James D. Patton

Vapor
plumed, steamy
billowing, collecting, falling
moisture, water, rain, ice
greeting, pelting, draining
slow, crystal
snow

Megan Ghormley

Diamantes can be profound or profane. The important thing is having fun. Try Diamante writing as a party game. Write one while you attend the next town council meeting. Encourage your friends to enter the contest. Maybe Professor Lindsey will write one about tourists.

James D. Patton



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arts association

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Artist Grants**

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Due on or before September 22, 1996

Who may apply--

The Grant is open to professional artists in any media. Artists showing serious intent, must be a part of the Cannon Beach Community, producing or actively exhibiting or performing within the city, or document short-term residence for the duration of the project proposed. The artist must have a defined project of the time of application. All work must be completed within a six (6) month period beginning with funding. Those projects already completed do not qualify. The artist must return to the community, by means of temporary exhibit, performance, community education, or as otherwise specified, a portion of the funded project as defined in the proposal.



Clatsop Community College offers a survival class in Beginning Conversational Spanish; Tuesdays September 19th through December 4, 1995 6:30-9:30 PM at Community Presbyterian Church in Cannon Beach. Instructor: Jeanie McLaughlin. Tuition: \$60/\$30 Gold Card. Call (503) 738-3347 or (503) 325-0910, ext. 2405

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Notes from Colorado (and the Edge)

Here I am on the Edge for an all too short visit. I gravitate to Jupiter's Books, and find our editor looking as well as he looked when I saw him last year. It's difficult for me to express the draw this place has -- I'm torn, because I feel as if I could be a part of a real community here, but if there's any other place where I also feel that, it's Boulder. It's not just the physical beauty, although growing up by an ocean makes me miss it when I'm away from it. It's not just a life stage, although having more to look back upon than may lie ahead is a factor in a lot of things right now. It's the time when just settling for life is no longer acceptable, that it is finally time to serve with more than a casual attitude, and the remaining years that the Great Mystery has in store should be about things that are meaningful, and that make a difference in the state of our besieged and troubled big blue spaceship. Or maybe it's that I just like the thought of living here next to the ocean, with the cool of the breeze, the gray of the sky, the green of the forest.

Mother and her sons, riding
the reclining cycles on the beach
Scuttle away, like crabs,
Into the mist.

"How much freedom can you afford?", Uncle Mike said to us, this last beautiful Wednesday August morning on the Edge. This stayed with me for a while. I caught a bit of "Helter Skelter" that evening after a few beers at Bill's. Seeing good old Charlie Manson again always brings up some things -- as a person opposed to the death penalty in principle, this chap always makes me think about high voltage. It'd be nice if life was simple -- good vs. evil, Bill vs. Newt (?), loggers vs. owls -- but it isn't. And, to badly paraphrase my Buddhist friends here in Boulder, we live with the contradiction. Sexual freedom? Probably a good idea. Gun freedom? Maybe not such a good idea. Literary and political freedom? You bet. Smoking or drinking or drugs? Not so easy. It's always where you leave off and I begin, it seems.

And how different the green is here -- even though the lawns tell me that there's not been a lot of rain. The bumblebees work the herbs and flowers outside my Cannon Beach lodging, and I think of the long wet and cold Colorado spring, and now the summer heat and wind has turned the lush grass of the spring into a major fire hazard. Back there, a ten point buck has been strolling by our house in the morning, and lately a young buck, antlers still covered with velvet, has been nibbling tentatively at the greenery as well. A family of barn swallows chose our porch to raise a small family, and in spite of the late season, seem to have done so, and are gone, leaving the morning strangely quiet after the steady chorus of plaintive cheeping. Sweet corn is arriving at the farmer's market, tomatoes are close behind, and the feast of the season begins (not to mention those fresh Edge blueberries that I've gorged on this week on my visit -- a few things don't taste as good in Colorado as in the Northwest).

The horizon of southwestern Nebraska stretches away from you like the ocean -- the sky opens up, and the land appears to roll away like the waves. Some in-laws, moving from the East Coast to Arizona on the Fourth of July, got this far and stopped. Come visit us, they said, we just rented an apartment. In Lodgepole, Nebraska. So there we were, out of sight of our beloved Rocky Mountains, the wind blowing, in a motel straight out of Alfred Hitchcock, beginning to understand the appeal of places like these -- friendly, open people, simple, straightforward lifestyle. It'll be a long time before the Californicators get here -- too much winter, too much summer, and too little of the things they think are essential to living. Just as well. It helps once in a while to see the real High Plains -- to know that the oak and maple trees, bluegrass and other human plantings of the Denver area are false. This sea of grass is the real thing.

The Sox seem to be for real (much to the dismay of Oriole fans), but the Cubs? Or the Rockies?

More later --

Jeff Custer



The day the Dead died.

Mr. Garcia was 53, a few years older than your editor, when he died on August 9th, 1995. Besides a deep sadness, the event also brought long forgotten images from the tired old brain.

Haight Street, 1967, filled with people, no cars moving, the Dead playing upstairs on a balcony, the Fire Department trying to clear a path for the engines, in case someone dropped a joint and caught the pavement on fire. On stage at the First Field Trip at the Country Fair Site near Eugene; 11 in the morning, playing jug band music for the Dead's crowd. Remembering the Dead started as a Jug Band. Wandering around backstage later, seeing the heroes and the hangers on. Getting dosed with some very clean acid. We wonder whether, had Capt. Trips not tried to "clean up his act", he would still be alive. We have lost several former "abusers" when they tried to change lifestyles after it was too late. We can imagine what the tired old body said when the usual stuff stopped happening. "Living on reds, vitamin C and Cocaine." The last chance we had to see The Dead was a Field Trip planned for Eugene a couple years back. We were going to play with Baby Gramps and have backstage passes with our pictures on them and everything. It was cancelled due to Garcia's illness. It was apparently about that time that the decision was made. This is not to claim a relationship that did not exist -- our friend Quincy Sugerman had a much more elaborate relationship, having seen over three hundred dead shows. The point being that all of our heroes have feet of clay. No one, be they Bill Clinton, or Jerry Garcia, or Bob Packwood, or your beloved editor, is without sin. The question becomes: what do we do with what is, all things considered. As far as we know Mr. Garcia did his best to do "the right thing." Whether it was popular and profitable, or not. "Sometimes the lights are shinin' on me, other times I can barely see."

We will all miss the gentle musician, who tried to help others, and loved just "playin' in the band".

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