

POEMS OF FALL

BY JONATHAN WILLIAMS

Fall is certainly now in full swing. Our region has poets who know how to capture the mood, memories and feelings of the season. These poems hold diverse experiences and illustrate how fall shapes us. The poets each capture the calm, quiet and distinct character of fall. These poems explore the weather, stories, animals and people who shape each poet's fall. Taken together, they offer warmth, humor, surprise and joy. We hope you find them intriguing and make you think of your own fall experiences.



Whirlwind

The other seasons come in softly, respectfully, Winter, an exquisite snowflake appears from a grey sky. Spring, a minuscule green bud or snowdrop beckons. Summer, a tiger swallowtail floats by. But fall arrives in a whirlwind, a vortex of leaves and limb, confetti of petals, and overturned pots. Records shatter, allowing salmon to rush in waters that a day before were too shallow to pass. Mosses, like chameleons, change from brown to green. Pumpkins orange and white materialize from their jungle of vines. The next evening as if nothing has happened, Venus shines her crystal light in the west. The geese honk south under Aquarius, and in the darkness a doe seeks out red apples littering the ground. Tomorrow I will rescue all the green tomatoes.

— Reba Owen

Another Turning

The bay wind whips my unruly pear tree, which has given me seven hard September pears from the few blossoms spared last Spring. We carry deck furniture to the basement, glass table, yellow umbrella, striped chairs. The yard-waste bin is full every pickup day, leaves fallen, and plant life scorched by August; let's clear the gar-



Florence Sage

den for rest. My mother died on the Autumn equinox 25 years ago. I'll put her gold ring on as she asked me to for the day, and bow my head to the turning of the year toward heavy rain and chilblains and Merry Christmas.

— Florence Sage

Migration

Come home The mist over the mountains seems to say, And an old stirring in the soul Pulls in some direction. Where? The restless air sings autumn in the gentler touch of the sun, Red yellow orange leaves, Swelling pumpkins on the vine, cider sharp meat of apples. Who can resist the longing to follow the honking geese? Days are mellow But the mist over the mountains Still calls Senses over run I protest that my home is here with you, Yet it will not let me be. Do you hear it, too? Will you come with me?

— Stephanie Davis

Cranberry Harvest

floodgates transform the bogs into swimming holes for precious stones as blood-red rubies round and tart float, dog-paddle Australian crawl breast and back-stroke their way to Thanksgiving dinner looking for all the world like a pirate's treasure chest or a slice of red velvet cake

— James Tweedie



James Tweedie

When Leaves Can Play

The leaves no longer the green webbed palms of summer shake loose and tumble against the thick brown ankles of trees. Then pry free to run across their parents roots and pad noisily down the dark October road to chase a jumpy walker. They grin as they whirl way up over the meadow where they too have desired the kiss of flower flirting butterflies. When the wind begins to see their cracks and veins it carries them back to where they started lays them down and whispers: "Next Year."

— Mary Lou McAuley

autumn splendour

a painting arises sepia's golds persimmons and half-way greens splattered upon the canvas wind swishes segmented colours sideways, up and down elongating transforming splashes once verdant, now a kaleidoscope of autumn in its kodachrome splendor gone the lush green monochrome now rich in splats and swipes soon fully ripened, their tipping points stealing our breath sharply

— Kathleen Dudley

Autumn

Just within our grasp were the rosy ripe

apples all waiting to pick
Autumn is rainy the leaves will begin to turn the cats won't go out It's too wet for cats. no help raking fallen leaves their lazy and smarter Love a soft rain in the morning, before pushing cats out, still sleeping life full of pleasant thoughts, in quiet wet morning before arising.

— Joan Masat

Coyote

The coyote watched her intently, as she picked berries And then she saw him "Coyote," she said "Do you want some berries. I can share." He nodded. Berries were laid on a log, and she slipped away. Coyote ate them with relish and quickly departed. They were almost as good as her chickens

— Joan Masat

Umqua River, Autumn

You can hear the season turning in the wind. A cloud of small birds sweeps up from the field, blowing away toward the woods. Yellow grasses bend at river's edge. With marshaling cries, geese begin their

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