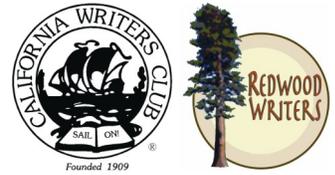


# POETRY CONTEST WINNERS



## 1ST PLACE, MICHELLE WING — “ART THERAPY”

Michelle Wing is a poet, fiction writer and essayist who is assisted in her creative endeavors by her partner Sabrina, and her trusty dog Ripley, always at her side. She has a master’s in Japanese studies, is the senior staff writer at the Calistoga Tribune, and has been published in *The Gay & Lesbian Review*, *Sinister Wisdom* and *Vintage Voices*.

## 2ND PLACE, CRYSTAL OCKENFUSS — “CHAMBERED NAUTILUS”

Crystal Mazur Ockenfuss was born in Western, New York and first studied poetry with Robert Creeley while an undergrad at the State University of New York at Buffalo. She pursued graduate studies in German and anthropology at the University of Virginia, followed by a long sojourn in Europe. She now lives, reads and writes in the Bay Area. Her poems appear in the current issues of *Ekphrasis*, *Slipstream* and *The Mochila Review*.



## 3RD PLACE, JODI HOTTEL — “CELTIC TWILIGHT”

Jodi Hottel’s work has been published or is forthcoming in *Nimrod International*, *Spillway*, *Naugatuck Review*, *Touch*, *English Journal*, *Frogpond* and anthologies from the University of Iowa Press, Tebot Bach, and the Healdsburg Arts Council. *Heart Mountain*, her chapbook of poems about the Japanese American internment is forthcoming from Blue Light Press, San Francisco.

# OUR ILLUSTRIOUS JUDGES



## ED COLETTI

Poet and painter Ed Coletti graduated from the Creative Writing Masters Program at San Francisco State University (under Robert Creeley). Coletti, a Vietnam veteran, is widely published in this country and in Europe. His Web presence includes "Ed Coletti's P3" and also "No Money In Poetry." Ed's latest published book is *When Hearts Outlive Minds* from *Conflux Press* in 2011.



## NANCY LONG

Nancy Long is a writer, director, producer and performer. She hosted the Livewire Literary Salon and has published numerous short stories and plays. Presently, she is producer for the Petaluma Readers Theatre and helps coordinate the People, Places and Poetry Group in Petaluma; volunteers for the Annual Petaluma Poetry Walk and V-Day Petaluma.



## PHYLLIS MESHALUM

Teacher and poet, tree-hugger and flash-mobster, Phyllis Meshulam is the author of three chapbooks. Her poems also appear in many literary magazines, and in the acclaimed anthology *Veterans of War, Veterans of Peace*. She teaches in schools, at Napa State Hospital and is Sonoma County coordinator for California Poets in the Schools.

# CONTEST CHAIR

## BARBARA TOBONI

Barbara Toboni, a graduate of Napa Valley College, writes short stories, poetry, memoir, and picture books. Her poetry and essays have been published in literary journals and newspapers including *Alura Poetry* and the *Napa Valley Register*. Her short stories have been published in anthologies, including *Wisdom Has a Voice*, *Vintage Voices*, and *Cup of Comfort*. *Undertow*, a chapbook of poetry, was published in 2011. She is a member of the California Writers Club (CWC) in Marin and in Santa Rosa, and the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI). She can be found online at [www.barbarasmirror.com](http://www.barbarasmirror.com).



**ART THERAPY**  
BY MICHELLE WING  
FIRST PLACE

They send me a slip of paper  
with his name above these words:  
“Anger Management — Certificate of Completion.”

As if.

As if twelve weeks of one-hour sessions,  
twelve weeks of talking about his feelings,  
twelve weeks of tips on counting to ten  
could make him into a new man,  
could undo the damage.

I know too well he can con anyone:  
Police. Lawyers. Landlords.  
Me.

And this piece of paper is the last slap I want to feel.

I go to my closet, and get my dancing dress,  
the little black one that twirls when I move,  
that reminds me of freedom and the time before.

Do you want to know what he was like?  
I’ll need some tools.

Scissors to slash the hemline.  
Blades to rip open sleeves.

A lighter to torch the fluttering strips.  
Dirty boots to grind out the flames.

Then a razor, to nick my forearm,  
so I can smear blood across his name,  
and pin that worthless paper to my ruined dress.

I bandage my arm, find a hanger, and  
display the dress like a piece of art.

It is my body on the wall, bruised and battered,  
and nobody, nobody, can say they don’t see.



## CHAMBERED NAUTILUS

BY CRYSTAL OCKENFUSS  
SECOND PLACE



Four chambered heart  
fragile nautilus barque  
your sway and thump  
thwarted by a cage  
of ribs – eve’s unlucky  
thirteen protection.  
Ballast. Break it.  
Carve a chink  
in this body’s armor.  
Float the heart  
high out on a  
tide of desire  
and faith.  
Make maps  
with mouths  
and lose them  
in limbs laced  
together – only your  
flesh shall be  
my fence.  
The place my heart  
will not  
pass.

## CELTIC TWILIGHT

JODI HOTTEL  
THIRD PLACE



silver bay  
canvas-white horizon

Conamara hills  
in charcoal silhouette

smoke-bottomed clouds  
still for sustained twilight

fertile Burren rock  
bathed in bronze

sun’s blaze clings to  
stone-bracelets

rubied reflections  
fuel muscular rhymes

ash tree branches  
cast in copper

snaking to steal  
gazes from the sun

leaves ignite  
sparkling  
lessons in seeing