

PRESS RELEASE

BELFAST POETRY FESTIVAL

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Kaber wins poetry contest

Judy Kaber's poem "Industrial remains" has won the 2009 Maine Postmark Poetry Contest sponsored by the Belfast Poetry Festival. Joel Lipman of the University of Toledo was the final judge.

Lipman describes Kaber's poem as ". . . a language-conscious, historically attentive, dynamic poem focused upon the confluence of land and sea, fresh and salt waters, industrial past and historical present. As a bardic poem, it probes the marls and "counterpane of mud" of the Passagassawkeag and sings "the backward tale" of "the bones of ten thousand chickens." The poem is organic and complexly conscious of the striations of death and existence, and is ultimately positive."

The contest was open to Maine residents mailing from a Maine postmark. Over 160 poets from across the state submitted 300 poems. "We are delighted to see the response to this contest," says Belfast Poet Laureate Linda Buckmaster. "It confirms that poetry is alive and well in the state of Maine." Submissions included those professionally presented, others written on typewriters, and still others hand written. They covered a wide variety of themes, styles, and abilities.

The Festival Steering Committee conducted a blind review of the submissions and winnowed them down to 10 finalists, which were then submitted to Lipman. After the winner was chosen, the committee opened the cover letters to find out who had submitted which poems.

In addition to Kaber of Belfast, the other finalists are: Bob Brooks, Stockton Springs; Jay Franzel, Wayne; Shelley Johnson, Appleton; Karyn Lie-Nielsen, Waldoboro; Carol Luchetti, Thomaston; Jefferson Navicky, South Portland; Weslea Sidon, Seal Cove; Martin Steingesser, Portland; and George Van Deventer, Bristol.

Kaber will read her poem at the Fifth Annual Belfast Poetry Festival that will be held October 16 and 17 in downtown Belfast. Calligrapher Jan Owen will present her with a calligraphy version of the poem. For more information, visit www.belfastpoetry.org.