

Three Poems by Dan Phillips

Ode to Havana

Every day, I can't forget your . . .

rumberos dancing in the streets
con mucho pasión y gracia
while ancient buildings
crumble around them.

classic American cars doing
the traffic mambo to the clave beats
of musicians on every corner.

humid air filled with the heady mix
of rice and beans, rum and cigars,
the perfume of exotic women.

Every night, when a million stars
spin above, I still hear
waves crash over the Malecón
that hugs your curvaceous coastline.

Your naked glory thrills,
Habanera love bites persist
to intoxicate my senses.

Kauai New Year's Eve

We shut windows and doors
against the storm whose
high winds and torrential rain
batter this beach house on piers,
built to withstand tsunamis.

We keep fearful vigil.
Under a spectral moon,
volcanic, *pali* slopes become
the ribs of a whale skeleton
cast up by tumultuous seas.

At dawn, rain subsides.
Mist rises from dark clefts,
leaving us, spent lovers, to sleep.

We wake to sun that sweeps
dark clouds southward,
unrolls a green carpet
from golden ridge tops.

Random raindrops ripple the lily pond,
goldfish surface, mouths open.

Spring With Grandson Amir

We search the stream,
scan the sunny surface
for water 'skeeters,
overturn rocks in dark pools
where crawdads may lurk,
save worms from drowning.

We make sure no troll hides
under the plank bridge
before we cross to the middle,
squat and peer into the culvert
to spy any eyes looking back at us,
then shout to hear our echoes.

We launch leaf boats down to the sea,
use twigs to catch scum-fish for lunch
to share with twig-fish guests . . .
tramp along the bank,
look for wild mint to crush and taste,
puff dandelion seeds,
fly away home with a ladybug
and the clouds overhead.

Dan Phillips is willing to go anywhere for inspiration to write but loves best to have his poems published here in Central California. His credits include *Porter Gulch Review*, *Montserrat Review*, *Monterey Poetry Review*, *Anthology of Monterey*

Bay Poets '04, Coastlines: Eight Santa Cruz Poets
and most recently *Catamaran Literary Reader*.