

# The New Criterion

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## Acorns

by Donald Hall

An oak twig drops  
in the path as we climb  
the slippery needled  
slope from the pond: nine

flame-shaped leaves,  
glossy, with yellow-  
green sinews veering  
out from red spines;

under the leaves, two  
acorns divagate  
from woody cups:  
shiny, metallic,

verdant, as acorn-  
meat presses from  
inside out, volume  
thrusting to smooth

the tumid surface  
of tiny mast-woman  
breasts, nipple-  
points centering pale

aureoles. We climb  
slowly, carrying  
a wicker basket up  
the slippery path.

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**Donald Hall** was named Poet Laureate of the United States in 2006.

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