

The New Criterion

Notes & Comments June 2000

The New Criterion Poetry Prize

The New Criterion began publishing poetry in April 1984, about a year and a half after its first issue appeared in September 1982. That April, we published poems by Donald Hall, Brad Leithauser, and Donald Petersen. Over the following sixteen years, we have published hundreds of poems by poets young and old, celebrated and obscure. In the world of poetry, *The New Criterion* is probably best known as a champion of what has come to be called the New Formalism. But, while subscribing to the sentiment behind Robert Frost's comment that he would as soon write free verse as play tennis with the net down, we have in fact published poems in many styles and forms, including a fair amount of free verse. Although it can certainly be said that we are not hostile to traditional poetic forms, our first criterion has always been to publish well-made poems that display linguistic sensitivity and aesthetic intelligence.

With this in mind, we are pleased to announce the first annual New Criterion Poetry Prize for a manuscript of poems that pay close attention to form. Outside judges for the contest this year will be Donald Justice and Elizabeth Spires, who will deliberate with the editors to determine the winner. The winning poet will receive \$3000, and the winning manuscript will be published by the Chicago publisher Ivan R. Dee. Additional details regarding the contest will be found in the advertisement we have placed at the back of this issue.

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