

Patricia Dobler Poetry Award, 2013 Winner

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Furious Bread

By: Chryss Yost

The yeast wakes up, faster than sourgrass after the rain.
I warm the old bowl on the pilot light, as my grandmother did,

scrape level the measure of flour using a knife's flat back.
There is no end to stubborn in this world. Even flour

fights like it would rather be grain again, recoils after every stretch,
the dough thick and heavy as a lump of potters' clay.

I push hard, throwing my weight behind each stroke,
arms stiff, lifting on my toes. Flatten, fold, turn, flatten, fold.

The newspaper on the table shows a senator. Resolved,
he says. One man, one woman. His God will not be swayed.

I pound the kneading board, knead until my wrists ache,
my skin crusted with salt, slowly will yield, will suppleness.

I round the dough to rest in the deep glazed bowl,
wait for rising, baking, food for those who sit at my table.

About the author

Chryss Yost is the author of *Mouth & Fruit* (Gunpowder Press, 2014), and of two fine press chapbooks: *La Jolla Boys* (Mille Grazie Press, 2000) and *Escaping from Autopia* (Oberon Press, 1998). Her poems have appeared in journals including *Askew*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *Hudson Review*, and *Solo* and have been widely anthologized. She has co-edited two major poetry anthologies *California Poetry: From the Gold Rush to the Present*, with Dana Gioia and Jack Hicks (Heyday Press, 2003) and *Poetry Daily: A Year of Poems for the World's Most Popular Poetry Website*, with Don Selby and Diane Boller (Sourcebooks, 2003). In April 2013, she was appointed poet laureate Santa Barbara, California.

Judge: Patricia Smith