Walt Whitman Center for the Arts and Humanities
2nd and Cooper Streets, Camden, NJ 08102  (609) 757-7276

Nick Virgilio

A POETRY READING

Nick Virgilio is widely known and admired throughout the Delaware Valley for his poetry workshops and readings. On the international scene he has been considered by many critics the most important poet of the Haiku in the English speaking world.

His poetry has been published in the Haiku Anthology (Doubleday) and numerous journals, magazines, and text books in the U.S. and abroad.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28
8:00P.M.
General Admission $2.00
the afternoon heat

down the dead-end street
in the heat, a milkweed seed
disappears in weeds

an autumn evening...
leaving behind the lame crow
on the scarecrow's arm

autumn evening farm:
leaving behind the lame crow
on the scarecrow's arm

Easter alone
ordering a ham sandwich
on the telephone

city playground
emptied by the school bell;
cool wind in the swings

on the littered beach,
lifting the carpet of surf:
fingers of the wind

the old year passes:
disposing of a pair
of rose-colored glasses
the cellar corner:
a curled leaf in a cobweb

on the manuscript
settling near an asterisk:
snowflake masterpiece

the shady highway;
cicadas are cranking up
another hot day

Gothic arch given
Gateway to heaven;
City sunset fits
Furnace at Auschwitz.
souls of the city
engraved with graffiti,
Parade to Paradise;
Semitic sacrifice
dropping family
name plates in the flaming mold
casting the new bell

the carpet of surf
creeping on the littered beach:
fingers of the wind

out of the darkness
illuminating snowflakes:
the lamp at the gate

an autumn evening...
leaving the tavern loaded:
road by the graveyard

an autumn evening...
reading her dead son's letters
ever and ever

the cathedral bell
has started the old boxer
sparring in the street
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now the wind has ceased;
settling on a maple leaf:
snowflake masterpiece

In the autumn woods
at night, the lost child is drawn
to a candlelight

In the autumn woods
at night, the lost child is drawn
to lone candlelight

mother and daughter
creating a new hairdo
criticize each other

under the peach tree
until mosquitoes get us...
country memories

the ambulance goes
and the rusty toy truck
fills up with snow

a cardinal's tune
locking up in the maple:
the afternoon moon

locking up to see
where cardinal song comes from:
the afternoon moon

creeping sunlight:
the shadow of the crucifix
slips into the crypt
pairs of lovers pass
the flag-covered coffin
shadows the young grass

the cellar corner:
a curled leaf in a cobweb
holds the spider's world

the abandoned mine
echoing in the autumn wind
beckons the brothers

family circle
centers flickering candle
country memories

old Quaker graveyard: MOVING
moving the tombstones, making
room for the playground

tiny fingerprints:
tiny butterfly finds

a cardinal's epitaph

the empty hotel
filled with mist and memories:
Legionnaire's Disease
my little brother
in the middle of the marsh:
the voice of mother

family circle
centers flickering candle
country memories

old Quaker graveyard: MOVING
moving the tombstones, making
room for the playground

tiny fingerprints:
tiny butterfly finds

a cardinal's epitaph

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filled with mist and memories:
Legionnaire's Disease
my little brother
in the middle of the marsh:
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old Quaker grave
old Quaker grave mounds:
moving the tombstones, making room for the playground

circling the dead oak
wind and rain
cawing in the gnawing cold
crows curse the chain saw

the darkness after
the battle for the valley:
the wind through the weeds

the first snowfall
cut from under the back porch;
little brother crawls

where Burma Shave signs
were strung along the highway:
spring
a series of Haiku

pausing in prayer
for the plane passing overhead

pausing in prayer—
plane passing overhead—
family of the dead

golden gnat
composing scores
of vanishing scores
with body bristles
brushing air on air
sharps and flats
zigzags and dives
whirling clefs
resting hovering
in motionless motion
pointless pen
graph in vain
timeless tunes
on scripts of wind

Viet Nam valley
where little brother was killed:

they come and they go
through the cemetery gate:
cold
the wind and snow

pausing in prayer,
a plane passing overhead

sitting on the curb
spitting images hitting
the moon in the well
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moving the tombstones
making room for the playground
the autumn moon

walking down the tracks
alone, turning my back
on the evening sun

Easter morning sun
perched on the churchyard cross:
a cardinal sings

Easter morning: slipping
walking quietly around
sleeping mallards
withered
In that windy oak,
with broken branches dangling;
a crow caws and caws

Easter dawn:
slipping around mallards
sleeping on the lawn

now the flies disperse
left in the wake of the hearse:
a pile of cow dung

Easter morning sun
perched on the churchyard cross:
a cardinal preens
the Easter moon:
the shadow of the crucifix creeps into the Tomb

a plane overhead
has caused them to pause in prayer:
family of the dead

looking down the tracks
a plane overhead
has caused a pause in prayer:
family of the dead

the distant graveyard
disappearing in the mist
the grove by the creek:
locusts echo each other
reach out in the mist

the far cicada
rising in the heat and haze:
the creek at my feet
on the darkened wall
of my dead brother's bedroom:
pencils
on the darkened wall
of my dead brother's bedroom:
the last mark how tall

the grove by the creek:
locusts repeat each other
reach out in the heat
on the darkened wall
of my dead brother's bedroom:
mother marks how tall

Viet Nam valley
where little brother was killed:
the wind through the weeds
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stolen pocketbook
emptied on the empty lot
holds the cold wind

Ash Wednesday:
mistaken in the deli
for an undertaker

at the monument,
taking turns reading aloud
the names of the dead

halfway up the slope,
unseen by the wolverine:
lame caribou calf

turning from the grave:
watching her baby son
play in the young grass

turning from the grave:
watching her baby son
play in the young grass

the lame caribou
lowers its velvet antlers
in the evening sun

grandfather's farm
covered with macadam:
"and you played, where?"

after the short night--
the tall ships--and the long day
of small children

old man shading eyes
locking up at snow geese
fading in the sky

the scum-covered pond:
a hovering dragonfly
becomes a fern frond

scum-covered pond:
the shadow of the dragonfly
becomes a fern frond

family bathtub
purging Passover guests:
carp from the river

squirrels in the park
quarrel over peanut shells:
the Bells of St. Mark's

a wad of pesos
stuffed in the mission poor box:
Who killed somebody?
guarding the casket
with a basket of wild flowers:
the retarded child

family bathtub
filled for the Passover guests:
carp from the river
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my fifty six years
of Heaven, Hell and Haiku:
the end of June

the other twin
didn't make it--
birth of a weaver

from baby rattle
to death rattle

faded album
scattered on the attic floor
pictures of the war

the other twin,
the one that didn't make it:
what would she have been?

from baby rattle
to death rattle

the bedridden boy
found at the window--the

a distant earthquake
is shaking dewdrops from the tops

her dear dead husband...
weaving his red pajamas:

a guest of cold wind
is helping the old beaver
fell the elm tree

the bedridden boy
found at the window--the

a gust of cold wind
is helping the old beaver
fell the elm tree

a snowy evening...
floating down the mountain stream
flowing out to sea

a water strider
is sailing around the horn
of the quarter moon
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subway graffiti

supporting nuclear freeze:
spring morning breeze

beneath "paid by the Committee to Re-Elect...."

billboard Santa Claus

Atlantic City
breakdancing on the boardwalk:
whirling newspaper

duly entered
in the motel register:
mosquito

among spatterdocks
huddled on the muddy creek:
motherless mallards

where missiles range in class,
a nun pours Easter Water
on the dewy grass

nail in my sole
for helping an old neighbor:
bitter cold

turning from the grave

on the city lot
an empty pocketbook
contains the cola wind

where thieves and muggers
leave
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moving the moon
among young spatterdocks:
foraging carp
raindrops on the creek:
the resurrection of reeds
and spatterdocks
visiting the valley
the morning after the battle:
the wind through the weeds
softening the bread
in the Communion wine
softening the bread
in the sacramental wine:
the old sexton's smile
expectant mothers
holding up candles in church:
the light in their eyes
Gettysburg stillness:
sunset silhouettes cannon
on Cemetery Hill
Gettysburg stillness:
sunset silhouettes of cannon
now under plastic
all weather and pigeon proof:
statue of St. Joan
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mist on the creek
only beginning, becoming
morning twilight

looking down the tracks
disappearing in the mist
the funeral bell
tolling over the obby.
the smell of fresh bread

a white butterfly
flutters through the heat and haze:
visiting the graves

father passes away;
recalling a colic baby
who cried night and day

a wild canary
has drawn the lost child
chasing flies
from the fish;
ribboned fans

another birthday;
mother recalls

another birthday;
my palsied mother recalls
the colic baby

pigeons on the roof:
St. Joan under plastic
all-weather proof

leaving the hospital
against the wishes of doctors;
the sun on the lawn

signing myself out
against the doctors' wishes;
the sun on the lawn

the Communion line
softening the bread in the wine
the old sexton's smile

pausing to soften
the Communion bread in wine;
the old sexton's smile

where church pigeons perched
at the window
tossing bread crumbs

at the window,
tossing bread crumbs from his

"They depend on me..."

watching bulldozers
level grandfather's farmhouse;
bitter cold

the week of waiting
for little brother's body;
the heat

from under the bridge,
the last of linden leaves rides
the outgoing tide

signing myself
out of the hospital;
the sun on the lawn

signing myself out
against the wishes of doctors;
the sun on the lawn

the sun on the lawn
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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28 8:00P.M.
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the cold misty marsh
surrounding the sleeping town
resounds with silence
papering the walls
with rejection slips;
the heat
on the antenna
running through its repertoire:
mockingbird
cold morning rain;
several soldiers boarding
the funeral train.

New Year's afternoon:
tossing another penny
on Poor Richard's Tomb
the more I study
the more it muddles

sign language silence
in the autumn morning mist:
the school for the Deaf
alone on the beach
reaching the dead marlin;
retreating fleas

another student
of mine passes away:
the autumn wind
as the tide rises,
and the mulberries ripen
carp come in to feed

the dog chain drawn around
to the back of the house--
the heat
from baby cry
to death rattle--

the barber and son
drawing the blinds of the shop
New Year's afternoon:
tossing another penny
on Poor Richard's Tomb

New Year's Eve
New Year's Eve
leaving the party of peers
to lock at the stars

alone on the beach,
a single string of footprints:
retreating fleas

ancestral name plates
melting in the flaming mold
casting the bronze bell
alone on the beach
reaching the half-eaten marlin:
retreating fleas
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In the pouring rain
not a single bite
for hours in the pouring rain:
carp fever

In the pouring rain,
not a single bite for hours:
carp fever

on a rose petal
fallen on the small coffin:
on the small coffin
sprinkled with rose petals:
a firefly settles

on the small coffin
sprinkled with holy water:
a firefly settles

pregnant peasant
bending over planting
watermelon seed
a firefly settles
on a fallen rose petal;
little brother's grave
the snow crust caves in

Easter alone
for the first time peace of mind
far away from home

empty arena
fingered in the bloodied sand:
the sign of the cross

the tidal creek ebbs
creeping down the pebbled beach
leaves the evening sun

the river ferry
leaving in the evening sun
delivers Walt Whitman

Easter holiday:
pausing on the wet causeway
headed for Key West
horse collars the moon

a dead rattlesnake
in the belly of a bass:
the moon in the lake
sickroom silence:
a cicada thymes
the death rattle

autumn nightfall:
the old priest draws the curtain
of the confessional

the hot copper sun
at the pond ripples' core:
a carp sucking scum

up cathedral steps
swept of rice and confetti:
a pair of caskets

the first day of spring
on the way to the cellar:
my father sings
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over the coffin, 
patrolling the open 
dragonfly 
gathering under 
the same canopy again: 
cold morning rain

ever the coffin, 
whirring the open 
someone 
gathering: 

over the coffin, 
shadowing the stars and stripes: 
dragonfly 

New Year's morning 
the potted geranium drops 
another blossom 

autumn thunder: 
the potted geranium drops 
another blossom 

a wild canary 

under the peach tree 
until mosquito got us 

cemetery gate 
in the shade of the willow: 
cicada shell 

Still where it fell 
beneath the graveyard willow: 
cicada shell 

early morning fog 
lifting from the lake shallows 
a snowy egret 

the first daffodils, 
as I bend down to pick some—remember he's gone 
grating 
horse radish: 
cicada 
ancestral name plates 
melting in the flaming mold: 
casting the bronze bell 

the creek after dark 
moving the young spatterdocks: 
foraging carp 
creek after dark 
moving young spatterdocks: 
foraging carp 
down the tracks to home 

a cardinal's tune 
looking up in the maple: 
the afternoon moon 

building sand castles— 
creeping into my footprint: 
incoming tide 
morning yoga: 
the near woodpecker 
drumming in my ear
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Programs made possible in part by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the City of Camden.
for my parents and patrons
Anthony and Rose
and my brothers Larry and Tony

after 21 years work, my book is now ready;
the poems will speak for themselves

where welfare mothers
line up on the city lot:
seeding dandelion

the poems herein were originally published in American Haiku Magazine,
Platteville, Wisconsin; Haiku West Magazine, Foret Hills, New York; Haiku,
Toronto, Ontario, Canada, Modern Haiku,
Madison, Wisconsin; Frogpond, New York;
Wind Chimes, Glen Burnie Maryland;
Leatherneck Magazine, Washington, D.C.
I am grateful to many people over the years especially, Jim Bull and
Don Bulte, Clement Hoyt, Editors of American Haiku Magazine;
Harold Gould Henderson for his great kindness to me; Leroy Kanterman of Haiku West;
R.H. Blyth; Kay Titus Mormon and Bob Spies for their fine work with Modern
Haiku; Elizabeth Searle Lamb

Church
Neighbors

Yours sincerely,
A. F. Anderson

John Anderson

39 & Broad Street

Nathan Colby

Working 08096
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the wind-swept tundra -
with velvet antlers still locked:
caribou skeletons

on frozen tundra,
with velvet antlers still locked:
caribou skeletons

approaching the grave,
the shadow of the widow
follows the coffin

the muddy creek clears
tops of spatterdocks appear:
droppings of deer

the shadow of the linden
reaches the parked hearse

approaching the grave,
the shadow of the widow
bends on the tombstone

In the village square
In the village square
honoring politicians;
the hot morning air
beneath rotting leaves,
beneath the old wooden porch:
the grave of the doll
donw the empty street,
freshly painted maracas
drying in the heat

hearing the voice of father
in the winds of March

alone at the grave:
the shadow of the widow
at bends - the tombstone

early-june-joining-
the human-chain-across-the-bridge
for-the-nuclear-freeze

signing myself out
of the city hospital:
the sun on the lawn

starting the New Year
recovering from heart attack:
conquering fear
cemetery silence

lifting the coffin
with the tips of their fingers:
a leaf in the wind

mingling with cigarette smoke
empty pumpkin
filled with sunlight and shadow:
dead flies on the sill

bathroom floor:
an ant whiles away the day
solving the tile maze
on the bathroom floor,
an ant whiles away the day
solving the tile maze
cold morning rain:
straining to read the names
on worn tombstones

In the winds of March
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on the darkened wall
of my dead brother's bedroom:
recalling how tall
visiting hours:
a fly follows the doctor
from room to room
shadows on the wall
looming in the sick room:
whispers in the hall
on the darkened wall
of my dead brother's bedroom:
markings how tall
drifting on the pond
along over the path of moonlight:
the song of the flute
entering the grove,
centering on the silence:
cicada
entering the grove,
centering the silence:
cicada
mission bell tower
showered with pigeon droppings:
nodding sunflowers

gathering under
the graveyard canopy again:
cold morning rain
gathering insects
over and under the train trestle:
swallows in the rain
over and under
the train trestle, swarming gnats:
swallows in the rain
swarming gnats over
and under the train trestle:
swallows in the rain
swarming gnats
over and under the train trestle:
swallows in the rain
from under the bridge,
riding the outgoing tide:
the last of winter
locking down the tracks,
turning my back on the sun:
slowly walking home
shadows on the wall
of my dead brother's bedroom:
whispers in the hall
old villagers queue:
adding ancestral name plates
to the bronze bell mold
The Walt Whitman International Poetry Center will present the Burlington County Footlighters' Production "Dust of the Road" on Friday, February 3rd at 8:30 PM. Dust of the Road is a modern morality play about a tormented spirit that roams the earth and confronts an Irish family with a choice: money or conscience. Dust of the Road is directed by Rosemary Abbate and stars Ginny and Peter Higgins, Steve Coar and Fred Doerr. The play was written by Kenneth Sawyer Goodman.

On February 10th at 8:30 PM, the Whitman Center will present "Yours, Mine and Shakespeare", a program of Shakespearean vignettes and pantomime featuring highlights from the play Taming of the Shrew. The very talented couple, Karmee Cirriotti and Bruce Curless of Moorestown will perform this program from the works of the Bard. Recently, they played to enthusiastic crowds at the Settler's Inn in Medford Lakes. Layle Silbert will read her prize-winning poetry. Steve Rehter and Gary Cosnet will provide the folk music.

(# Bonnie Squires will read from her new book of poems "New Eden". Music by Folk singer Bruce Sturdivant on Friday, Feb. 3rd)

The public is invited to all programs at the Whitman Center 2nd and Cooper Streets, Camden. The Center features daily readings from the works of major and minor poets beginning at 11:45 AM. On Wednesdays, local poets are afforded the opportunity to read their work. For further information, telephone 757-7276, Area Code 609.
The firefly-hunter:
still roaming the rice paddies
of Viet Nam, I wonder?

bitter cold and gusty
for helping an old neighbor
rusty nail in my sole

checking the streetlight
reflected in the puddle:
snow forecast tonight.

The firefly-catcher
still roaming the rice paddies
of south Viet Nam
You are cordially invited
to a reading by
Nick Virgilio
from his first book of poems
Selected Haiku
at the Walt Whitman Center
for the Arts and Humanities
Second and Cooper streets
Camden, New Jersey
Friday, May 10, 1985
8:00 p.m.
$4 per person
$3 students, senior citizens
Reception following reading
Copies of Selected Haiku
Will be available
smearred on the cover
of dog-eared Modern Haiku:
the New Year egg nog
mosquito

trailing her fur scarf,
fresh out of the county jail:
polishing her nails

my palsied mother
fallen on the kitchen floor:
the news of the war

my dead brother's name
smeared on the cover
of dog-eared Modern Haiku;
mosquito

In the attic trunk,
a lock of his baby hair
and his combat boots

Viet Nam monument:
a group of gold star mothers
grieving in the heat

Viet Nam monument:
on the protestor's placard
WHY?
They Died For Nothing

Viet Nam monument:
a group of gold star mothers
grieves in the cold wind
through the August heat,
at the end of the long week:
his body arrives
through the August heat:
his body on ice

after the body,
after the long summer months:
the trunks of his clothes
his clothes in a trunk
two trunks filled with clothes

on the subway train
through
riding free in wind and rain:
pigeon

hijacked airliner:
detaining passengers

in the driving rain

after the bell,
within the silence:
within myself
The Walt Whitman International Poetry Center will present the Burlington County Footlighters' Production "Dust of the Road" on Friday, February 3rd at 8:30 PM. Dust of the Road is a modern morality play about a tormented spirit that roams the earth and confronts an Irish family with a choice: money or conscience. Dust of the Road is directed by Rosemary Abbate and stars Gina and Peter Higgins, Steve Coer and Fred Doerr. The play was written by Kenneth Sawyer Goodman.

On February 10th at 8:30 PM, the Whitman Center will present "Yours, Mine and Shakespeare", a program of Shakespearean vignettes and pantomime featuring highlights from the play Tamino of the Shrew. The very talented couple, Karmee Cipriotti and Bruce Curless of Moorestown will perform this program from the works of the Bard. Recently, they played to enthusiastic crowds at the Settler's Inn in Medford Lakes. Leyle Silbert will read her prize-winning poetry. Steve Rahter and Gary Cosnet will provide the folk music.

(# Bonnie Squires will read from her new book of poems "New Eden". Music by Folk singer Bruce Sturdivant on Friday, Feb. 3rd)

The public is invited to all programs at the Whitman Center 2nd and Cooper Streets, Camden. The Center features daily readings from the works of major and minor poets beginning at 11:45 AM. On Wednesdays, local poets are afforded the opportunity to read their work. For further information, telephone 757-7276, Area Code 609.
shaking dewdrops
on the tops of my new shoes:
the wake of the hearse.

town undertaker

shaking dewdrops on my shoes:
the wake of the hearse.

cemetery grass

shaking dewdrops on my shoes:
the wake of the hearse.

senior citizen

yadda yadda yadda
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On February 10th at 8:30 PM, the Whitman Center will present "Yours, Mime and Shakespeare", a program of Shakespearean vignettes and pantomime featuring highlights from the play Tamina of the Shrew. The very talented couple, Karmee Ciriotti and Bruce Curless of Moorestown will perform this program from the works of the Bard. Recently, they played to enthusiastic crowds at the Settler's Inn in Medford Lakes. Layle Silbert will read her prize-winning poetry. Steve Rahter and Gary Cosnet will provide the folk music.

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Triple X movie, enio

Trip le X movie,

senior citizen discount:

the slow day...

the evening wind

the evening wind

sweeping linden leaves from the lawn

uncovers a bamboo broom.

evening moon

and wind sweeping linden leaves

uncovers bamboo broom.

on the temple bell

has settled and is singing

a cicada

pink morning glories

adorning the chain link fence:

dew

on monuments.

bitter cold and gusty

by the fire-gutted house:

rusty nail in my sole

bitter cold and gusty

inspired by the fire-gutted house

rusty nail in my sole

the fire-gutted house

howling in the piercing cold:

rusty nail in my sole.

bitter cold and gusty

for helping an old neighbor

rusty nail in my sole

helping a neighbor in Hell

rusty nail in my sole

the fire-gutted house

helping a neighbor in Hell:

rusty nail in my sole.

the firs

the fire-gutted house

helping an old neighbor

rusty nail in my sole

the fire-gutted house

for helping an old neighbor

rusty nail in my sole.

the street market hums:

hurrying through snow flurries,

people to and fro.

the autumn wind

sweeping leaves from Tairo's tomb:

a bamboo broom

evening wind

sweeping leaves from Tairo's Tomb:

bamboo broom.
Nick Virgilio

A POETRY READING

Nick Virgilio is widely known and admired throughout the Delaware Valley for his poetry workshops and readings. On the international scene he has been considered by many critics the most important poet of the Haiku in the English speaking world.

His poetry has been published in the Haiku Anthology [Doubleday] and numerous journals, magazines, and text books in the U.S. and abroad.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28
8:00 P.M.
General Admission $2.00

Programs made possible in part by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the City of Camden.
the cross in the park
created from railroad tracks;
the old wines remark
the blin widow's hands
reaching out in the moonlight;
remember his face
empty rowboat
reflection
touching temple
moon in the pond
where the farm road
narrow to a wheelbarrow rut:
toad in the dust
Intensive Care: 
a fly on the window explores
the vacant vastness
the far line of cars,
and the cemetery beyond
circle the old pond
another autumn
covers beer cans on the bottom:
the death of the pond
covering beer cans
on the bottom of the pond:
another autumn

tiny fingerprints
faded wallpaper flowers:
fifty summers since

at the pep rally,
miming with politicians;
the mockingbird's song
deep in the river
through a crumbling human skull
quivering eel grass
deep in the river,
passing through a human skull:
quivering eel grass
on the small coffin,
crawling from a fallen rose

visiting hours:
the fly from the room next door
lights on the flowers
standing at the bier
of the baby
now the campfire dies;
the old storyteller
speaks to sleepy eyes
rocky
on the misty shore
exploring rusty cannon:
the roar of the surf
shadows on the wall--
reflections in the mirror--
whispers in the hall
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early mornin' fog
swirling on the frozen lake;
my shadow walks the dog

under saffron cloth,
under the deerskin cushion:
summer grass

morning mist swirling on the creek
drifting on the pond
over sunken roots and logs:
the tune of his flute

beyond tenements
reflecting the cemetery:
city sewage pond
drifting on the pond
over the path of moonlight:
the tune of his flute

that hilltop snowman
lost his head in the storm
raising the new barn,
tapping the cellar barrel:
tasting the new wine

where cakes of lake ice
melted in the cellar hole:
old Monticello

escaping in song
out of the tangle of vines:
cicada

"Dad's got crab apples
all over him!"
shadows on the grave

Dad's got crab apples
all over him!

TAPPING THE BARREL
AFTER RAISING THE BARN:
tasting the new wine
tapping the barrel,
after raising the new barn:
tasting the new wine

shadows on the wall
moving towards the mirror:
whispers in the hall

shadows on the wall
moving towards the sick room:
whispers in the hall

cicada

escaping in song
from the crown of the linden:
cicada

signing myself out,
through the hospital window:
the sun on the lawn
Walt Whitman Center for the Arts and Humanities
2nd and Cooper Streets, Camden, NJ 08102 (609) 757-7276

A Poetry Residency with

Nick Virgilio

READING May 6, 8pm
WORKSHOPS May 9, 11, 13, 7:30 pm

Nick Virgilio is widely known and admired throughout the Delaware Valley for his poetry workshops and readings. On the international scene he has been considered by many critics the most important poet of the Haiku in the English speaking world.

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All Sessions $12.00
Reading only $3.00

Free supervised parking for all evening performances.
Programs made possible in part by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the City of Camden.
homeward through the heat

only the rope swings
over the old swimming hole:
the cold wind

through the pale grey veil
of mist shrouding the muddy creek:
a shrieking blue jay sails

lifting in the wind
still swinging wildly
after the last school bus leaves:
empty playground swings

on the small coffin
sprinkled with holy water:
an autumn fly

as the school bus leaves,
lifting in the autumn wind:
empty playground swings

Colorado River:
a runaway red balloon
rides the white water

not a drop of rain
grain fields filled with grasshoppers:
dust from the hot plains

I, beneath the linden,
you, in the Volkswagen, waving;
the rain between us

Viet Nam monument
reflecting the evening sun

the first of July
emblazoned on the front page:
Hostages Released

after the funeral,
feuding over the farmland
and grandfather's will
raising a litter
of dandelion cottontails:
the summer wind

a cicada snores
while a buzzing horsefly
 tours the manure pile

children lining up,
pushing her son to the front:
Easter egg hunt

forcing her son
to the front of the Easter Egg

the Stepford mother
is pushing her son to the front
of the Easter egg hunt
children lining up
for the Easter egg hunt:
pushing her son to the front
children lining up
for the town Easter egg hunt:
her son to the front

reading the tea leaves
at the bottom of the cup:
the old gypsy's face
eyeing each other,
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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28
8:00P.M.
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an English sparrow
perching in the church rain spout
shouts the spring sermon

out of the liberty Bell
comes a horsefly

snow-covered graves
slowly emerging from mist:
the ghosts of slaves

early June
a snapping turtle lays eggs
behind a tombstone

old Mexico drought:
freshly painted maracas
drying in the heat

now under plastic
all weather and pigeon proof:
statue of St. Joan

lawn mowing neighbor
so early sunday morning

empty stadium
filled with wild flowers and weeds:
the flagpole's shadow

rising and falling
beneath an empty rowboat:
the beat of the drumfish

before Passover,
sharing the family bathtub:
carp from the river

Fourth of July:
under the liberty bell
buzzing horsefly

through the wind and rain,
plastered to the passing hearses:
headlines: President Slain...

now under plastic
alone and pigeon proof:
statue of St. Joan

old Mexico street:
freshly painted maracas
drying in the heat

the vacuum cleaner
drowning out mother's grieving:
my dead brother's room

listening in bed:
thunder applauding the lightning
awakening the dead

sitting by the lake,
taking in the insect scene:
swallows at daybreak

for Passover meal,
sharing the family bathtub:
carp from the river

mailed to the spite fence,
where the neighbor's kids hung it:
the run-over cat
Nick Virgilio

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28
8:00PM.
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now they bury him
a choir of cicadas
inspires the requiem

turning from the mirror
with more than tears in her eyes:
the terror of war

In the blinding snow
finding a scarecrow
with no mind

somewhere in the blinding snow
buried yesterday;
cronies on the corner
recall tall stories

the snow crust caves in
with each gleaming gust of wind:
the rush of the stream

where brave deeds rallied
the battle for the valley:
the wind through the weeds

sharpening its knives,
trying to eat the steak whole:
fly on the plate

the morning after
the battle for the valley:
the wind through the weeds

snow-blind:
finding a scarecrow
with no mind
creeping sunlight:
the shadow of the crucifix
slips into the crypt

spitting images
hitting rippling reflections:
giggles in the well

spitting images
hitting rippling reflection:
giggles in the well

now the elder blooms
by the marsh in the moonlight:
linden blossoms soon

the temple bell tolls
rolling out on the spring breeze:
smell of cherry trees

still before the storm
from the muzzles of cannon:
icicles form

the first gypsy moth
bursting from the chrysalis:
the crescent moon

the darkness after
the battle for the valley:
the wind through the weeds

spitting images hitting
the moon in the well

old mother and son
holding on to one another

old mother and son
holding on to each other
reaching the open grave

beside grandfather,

grandmother and my brother:
burying another...
Nick Virgilio

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on the tarantula
preserved in formaldehyde:
my dead brother's name

on the cracked sidewalk
covered with frozen snow:
my dead brother's name

hospital quiet
at twilight, a cicada
follows the death rattle

empty rain barrel
filled with dusty cobwebs;
storm cloud shadows

city street market
behind the "No Picking, Please" sign:
rotten plums

winter evening
plumbing the depths of hunger:
empty garbage can

hospital quiet
at twilight, a cicada
follows the death rattle

empty rain barrel
filled with dusty cobwebs;
storm cloud shadows

city street market
behind the "No Picking, Please" sign:
rotten plums

winter evening
plumbing the depths of hunger:
empty garbage can

on the neon sign
palsied hands turning
the pages of the faded album;
the autumn wind

on the neon sign
flashing over the flophouse:
Jesus Saves

In the dark valley,
one dying among the dead
eyes the rising sun

the shadows of cloud
graveyard graffiti
on the mausoleum door:
Jesus Saves

following the parade
for Gay liberation:
tiger swallowtail

the grove by the creek
seesawing in the cold wind:
the cawing of crows

exchanging vows
out of my dead sister's cross:
my gold wedding band

boulevard billboard
replacing the candidate's face:
Thanksgiving turkey

subway graffiti:
the shadow of HariKrsihna

summer solstice:
gathering by the river
in the evening sun

closer to heaven
on my fifty seventh birthday:
this

night of stars
In the dark valley,
one dying among the dead
eyes the rising sun

through dusty cobwebs
in the empty rain barrel:
the shadows of cloud

graveyard graffiti
on the mausoleum door:
Jesus Saves

following the parade
for Gay liberation:
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my dead father
stopped on his wrist when he died:
my dead brother’s watch

using
a coat hanger:
the heat

burying
the dead fetus:
the heat

removing
her wedding rings:
the heat

above the X rating
in pornographic paradise:
billboard paramours

turning off
the abortionist’s light:
the heat

reading the tea leaves
at the bottom of the cup:
the autumn moon

between two showers
shadowing Queen Anne’s lace:
bowing sunflowers

on the shriveled child
shivering in the cold rain:
tattooed numbers

old Joe on the bench
poking his cane in the dust

now stored in moth balls

now stored in moth balls
until the Resurrection:
his “I-Thou” tee-shirt

my palsied mother
fallen on the kitchen floor:
the news of the war

Liberty’s light burns
anchored off Ellis Island:
the tall ships return

In the rp
In the prison yard,
the shadow of the gallows
follows the hangman

Viet Nam monument
traced on a piece of paper:
my dead brother’s name

raising the hero
above the heads of the crowd:
the blazing sun

the desert highway:
the shadow of the roadrunner
framed by the window,
building the hilltop snowman:
a moon silhouette
escaping in flight:
out of the blackberry maze:
white butterfly

now stored in moth balls