

SINCE 1986, THE POET'S MOST TRUSTED RESOURCE!

1 9 9 8

# POET'S MARKET<sup>®</sup>

**USED**

5,000+  
COPIES  
SOLD!

\$17.25

1,800 PLACES TO PUBLISH YOUR POETRY

**THE LEADING GUIDE** on  
where & how to publish your poems  
& poetry collections

## **The most comprehensive & authoritative listings:**

- Submission guidelines & editorial needs
- Complete contact information, including addresses, phone numbers, websites & e-mail
- Payment policies & reporting times
- **1,880+** editors seeking your work

## **Plus, articles & interviews:**

- Tips from celebrated & newly published poets
- Business advice on what & how to submit, chapbook & book publishing, trends in the field

**100%  
Updated  
Plus 400  
New Markets**

1 9 9 8

# POET'S MARKET

1,800 PLACES TO PUBLISH

YOUR POETRY

EDITED BY

**CHANTELLE BENTLEY**

ASSISTED BY

**TARA A. HORTON**



**WRITER'S DIGEST BOOKS**  
CINCINNATI, OHIO





The cover illustration is a detail of a painting by Berge Missakian. Missakian is a Canadian artist from Montreal. He has studied art at the American University of Beirut; Cornell University, Ithaca, NY; and Concordia University, Montreal, Canada. Illusion, imagination and fantasy appear in his paintings and set as elements which unify his compositions with explosively brilliant shapes of color. Missakian, who is listed in several books on art, including *Who's Who in American Art* (22nd edition), exhibits internationally. He celebrates passion over passivity, movement over inertia and joy over melancholic outlook. His internet URL is <http://www.generation.net.studiom1>

*Still Life No. 22*  
24" x 30"  
acrylic on canvas

If you are a poetry publisher and would like to be considered for a listing in the next edition of *Poet's Market*, send a SASE (or SAE and IRC) with your request for a questionnaire to *Poet's Market*—QR, 1507 Dana Ave., Cincinnati OH 45207. Questionnaires received after March 13, 1998, will be held for the 2000 edition.

Supervising Editor: Barbara Kuroff.

Assistant Managing Editor: Cindy Laufenberg.

**Poet's Market.** Copyright © 1997 by Writer's Digest Books. Published by F&W Publications, 1507 Dana Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio 45207. Printed and bound in the United States of America. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any electronic or mechanical means including information storage and retrieval systems without written permission from the publisher, except by reviewers who may quote brief passages to be printed in a magazine or newspaper.

International Standard Serial Number  
0883-5470

International Standard Book Number  
0-89879-796-9

**Attention Booksellers:** This is an annual directory of F&W Publications. Return deadline for this edition is December 31, 1998.

# From the Editor

The reasons people write poetry are as endless as the number of poets who write it. For me, the necessity of a creative outlet to maintain my civility is one reason to write poems. Another might be to gain a better understanding of the world, or to connect with others through shared experiences. Some poets might not logically understand why they create poetry; they simply know they must.

Regardless of the reasons, poetry does exist and with each year its presence in society increases. In fact, according to the May 15, 1997, edition of the *Wall Street Journal*, poetry has even appeared in the fiscal papers of Barnes & Noble, Inc. The 1996 annual report for the megabookstore indicates its poetry sales grew 40 percent from a year earlier. Great news for the more than 1,100 volumes of poetry produced, but what does it mean for poets still struggling for that first sale?

The correlation for poets is that with increased interest comes increased publishing opportunities and more exposure through readings and other poetry-related events. For this edition, it means over 400 new listings and 600 plus pages of information—the largest *Poet's Market* ever.

Along with an increase in pages, the *1998 Poet's Market* also contains a few new elements. First, the Glossary of Poetic Forms and Styles helps you understand the specific poetry forms and styles sought by editors. Second, the Websites of Interest to Poets guides you to websites with information on both craft and potential markets. Moreover, this edition gives you an inside look at the Internet in Trends in the Field: Internet Opportunities for Poets.

The third new element is a set of icons that eases your search for Canadian and overseas listings. A maple leaf (♣) before a listing indicates Canadian markets, an asterisk (\*) overseas markets and, regardless of a listing's locale, a bullet (●) indicates unique information giving you additional insight into the markets' preferences.

We also invite you to look at our own poetry preferences with the announcement of the winners of the *1998 Poet's Market* Poetry Contest. You can learn about the winners and read their winning poems on pages 473-476. And, on page 2, you will find the rules for our 1999 contest. In fact, this year's theme allows you to tell us why you write poetry.

To learn more about why some successful poets write, read our interviews with poets Michael Glaser, Taylor Graham, Susan Yuzna and Aleda Shirley. Also, read the interview with David Starkey who tells how he teaches poets to successfully market their work.

And that is what we do with each edition of *Poet's Market*—provide you with information about opportunities for poets and help you make the most of those opportunities. With today's increased interest in poetry, there's more information for you to consider while searching for the perfect market. *Poet's Market* can help you narrow the field and get your poems published.

Whether you write for your sanity or to connect with others does not matter. What matters is that you keep writing and reading poetry. Then become a part of poetry's resurgence—join a writing group, attend a conference, participate in a reading, submit your work. A whole world of poetry is there for you to explore. Enjoy the journey!



Chantelle Bentley  
poetsmarket@fwpubs.com

# Contents

## 1 From the Editor

## 2 A Call for Entries

*Enter our 1999 poetry contest and see your work in the next edition.*

## 3 How to Sell Your Poetry Using Poet's Market

## 6 U.S. and Canadian Postal Codes

## 7 Trends in the Field: Internet Opportunities for Poets

*Learn what publishing opportunities and resources exist for poets on the Internet and how to access them. Also, read what some editors and publishers are saying about the Net.*

## 11 Charting Your Path to Poetry Publication

*We've outlined a step-by-step approach to every aspect of the submission process—from how many poems to submit to questions of copyright, cover letters and simultaneous submissions. Also included is information about chapbook and book publishing options.*

## 20 Key to Symbols and Abbreviations

## The Markets

## 21 Publishers of Poetry

*Here you'll find about 1,800 markets for your work, including small circulation newsletters, mass circulation magazines, literary journals, electronic publications, small presses and trade book publishers. Approximately 400 of these markets are new to this edition. And all are updated. Read the introduction for specific details.*

## 24 Understand Market Category Codes

### Insider Report Interviews:

**42 Brian Swann**—*Learn why this poet and editor says poets must move beyond "nature scenes" if they seek publication in the environmental advocacy journal of the NRDC.*

**70 Alan Britt**—*Read why this poet and editor believes poets must take responsibility for their poetry educations and get their "blood into the words."*

**154 John C. Leonard**—*Discover how this editor keeps from becoming an editorial ogre and why he sees "patience as the most difficult task a poet can face."*

**208 David Starkey**—*Meet a poet who learned to live his dream of writing and publishing poetry and now helps other poets achieve their dreams.*

**246 Aleda Shirley**—*Find out why this poet says "staying honest and writing for the love of the poem" should be the main focus of a poet's efforts.*

**292 Michael Glaser**—*Meet a poet who says poets must join the poetry community to really understand the market.*

**336 Michael Dylan Welch**—*Learn why this poet, editor and first vice-president of the Haiku Society of America says haiku is more than just a syllabic form.*

**388 Taylor Graham**—*Discover how this poet, through her experiences as a volunteer search-and-rescue dog handler, created a powerful outlet for her work.*

- 423 Charles Waugaman**—Read why this poet and editor says Christian poets must use universal experiences to convey their messages, not “heavy-handed morality.”
- 442 Susan Yuzna**—Find out this poet’s opinions on handling critics, being a woman writer and establishing priorities.
- 470 Contests and Awards**  
Everything from prestigious awards offered by private foundations to contests sponsored by regional poetry societies. To learn more about poetry book competitions, read the interview with Richard Phillips, award director of the Richard Phillips Poetry Prize, on page 490. And, read the winning poems from the 1998 Poet’s Market Poetry Contest on pages 473-476.
- 503 State and Provincial Grants**  
A list of arts councils in the United States and Canada that can provide assistance to poets.

## Resources

- 506 Conferences and Workshops**  
Opportunities to learn more about the craft of poetry and marketing your work.
- 526 Writing Colonies**  
Places that provide concentrated time to start or complete projects.
- 534 Organizations Useful to Poets**  
Listings of major organizations and smaller groups that encourage and support poets by offering a wide variety of services.
- 551 Publications Useful to Poets**  
Magazines, newsletters and books about writers, writing and publishing.
- 556 Websites of Interest to Poets/  
Publications Accepting E-mail Submissions**  
Lists of websites providing information and opportunities for poets. Also a list of those markets within the book that are open to e-mail submissions.
- 558 Glossary of Poetic Forms and Styles**
- 559 Glossary of Listing Terms**

## Indexes

- 560 Chapbook Publishers Index**  
Publishers who consider chapbook manuscripts (small volumes of poetry).
- 562 Geographical Index**  
Magazines, presses, conferences/workshops and writing colonies by state or country. Discover which are in your area.
- 575 Subject Index**  
Publishers according to their specializations, including those who seek poetry on certain subjects, in certain forms, or by certain groups.
- 581 General Index**  
All titles in the book alphabetically, with cross-references where necessary.



# From the Editor

The reasons people write poetry are as endless as the number of poets who write it. For me, the necessity of a creative outlet to maintain my civility is one reason to write poems. Another might be to gain a better understanding of the world, or to connect with others through shared experiences. Some poets might not logically understand why they create poetry; they simply know they must.

Regardless of the reasons, poetry does exist and with each year its presence in society increases. In fact, according to the May 15, 1997, edition of the *Wall Street Journal*, poetry has even appeared in the fiscal papers of Barnes & Noble, Inc. The 1996 annual report for the megabookstore indicates its poetry sales grew 40 percent from a year earlier. Great news for the more than 1,100 volumes of poetry produced, but what does it mean for poets still struggling for that first sale?

The correlation for poets is that with increased interest comes increased publishing opportunities and more exposure through readings and other poetry-related events. For this edition, it means over 400 new listings and 600 plus pages of information—the largest *Poet's Market* ever.

Along with an increase in pages, the *1998 Poet's Market* also contains a few new elements. First, the Glossary of Poetic Forms and Styles helps you understand the specific poetry forms and styles sought by editors. Second, the Websites of Interest to Poets guides you to websites with information on both craft and potential markets. Moreover, this edition gives you an inside look at the Internet in Trends in the Field: Internet Opportunities for Poets.

The third new element is a set of icons that eases your search for Canadian and overseas listings. A maple leaf (♣) before a listing indicates Canadian markets, an asterisk (\*) overseas markets and, regardless of a listing's locale, a bullet (●) indicates unique information giving you additional insight into the markets' preferences.

We also invite you to look at our own poetry preferences with the announcement of the winners of the *1998 Poet's Market* Poetry Contest. You can learn about the winners and read their winning poems on pages 473-476. And, on page 2, you will find the rules for our 1999 contest. In fact, this year's theme allows you to tell us why you write poetry.

To learn more about why some successful poets write, read our interviews with poets Michael Glaser, Taylor Graham, Susan Yuzna and Aleda Shirley. Also, read the interview with David Starkey who tells how he teaches poets to successfully market their work.

And that is what we do with each edition of *Poet's Market*—provide you with information about opportunities for poets and help you make the most of those opportunities. With today's increased interest in poetry, there's more information for you to consider while searching for the perfect market. *Poet's Market* can help you narrow the field and get your poems published.

Whether you write for your sanity or to connect with others does not matter. What matters is that you keep writing and reading poetry. Then become a part of poetry's resurgence—join a writing group, attend a conference, participate in a reading, submit your work. A whole world of poetry is there for you to explore. Enjoy the journey!



Chantelle Bentley  
poetsmarket@fwpubs.com

## A CALL FOR ENTRIES

To see *your* work in the next edition of *Poet's Market*, simply write a great poem(s) about why you write poetry—and enter your work in our poetry contest. The best three poems will be published in the **1999 Poet's Market**. And the three winners will receive a free copy of our annual directory and a cash prize of \$150, \$100 or \$75, respectively. Read the following rules for details.

1. All poems must be original, unpublished, and not under consideration by any other publisher or in any other contest.
2. *Poet's Market* retains first publication rights to the three winning poems, which will be published in the 1999 edition (to be released in September 1998). All other rights will be returned. Note: *Poet's Market* does not claim *any* rights to any other work.
3. Each poem must relate to the topic: why you write poetry. Poems may be in any form, rhymed or unrhymed, but no poem can exceed 32 lines in length.
4. You may enter as many poems as you like, but each poem counts as one entry and must be accompanied by a \$3 handling fee. (Make checks or money orders payable to Writer's Digest Books.)
5. Poems must be clearly typed (single-spaced with double-spacing between stanzas) on one side of 8½ × 11 or 8¼ × 11¾ (A4) white paper.
6. You must submit two copies of each entry. On one copy, include your name, address and telephone number in the upper left corner. The second copy must only contain the poem. Entries will be separated on arrival to allow for blind judging.
7. All entries must be postmarked by midnight, January 31, 1998. **Note that manuscripts cannot be acknowledged or returned.**
8. Every entry will be read and judged by the staff of *Poet's Market*. In the event of a tie, an outside judge will be consulted.
9. Winning poets will be notified by phone on or before March 13, 1998. To receive the names of the winning poets (after March 27, 1998), you must enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope (or self-addressed envelope and International Reply Coupon) with your entry.
10. The three winning poets will receive \$150, \$100 or \$75, respectively, and a copy of the **1999 Poet's Market**.
11. Employees of F&W Publications, Inc. and their immediate family members are not eligible.
12. *Poet's Market* reserves the right to forego publication of any winning entry. In such cases, first rights will be returned.

Note: Failure to comply with these guidelines will result in disqualification.

Send entries to: **1999 Poet's Market Poetry Contest**  
1507 Dana Ave.  
Cincinnati, OH 45207

Deadline: January 31, 1998



# How to Sell Your Poetry Using *Poet's Market*

To reap the benefits of *Poet's Market*, you need to know how to use it. After all, this directory not only provides listings of poetry publishers, but it is also designed to help you determine which ones are the best markets for your work.

The first step, however, is to examine your poetry. Do you write poetry that makes a political statement? poetry about wildlife? religious symbols? other poets? Do you write sonnets? prose poems? about a certain area? in a language other than English?

Maybe you don't write any specific type of poetry. Maybe the answer depends on which one of your works we're talking about. No matter. If you've put craft into your poems, you'll find places to publish them.

## START WITH THE INDEXES

All Publishers of Poetry listings are coded as to the category of poetry they are seeking. Publishers that desire poetry within certain realms—on certain subjects, in certain forms, or by certain people—can be quickly identified by a **IV** and terms denoting the specialization(s). For example, *Dreams and Nightmares* is coded **IV-Science fiction/fantasy** because it seeks material related to those genres.

Once you've defined your own poetry, you don't need to comb each page for compatible listings. Turn to the Subject Index (where you will find all publishers with **IV** codes divided according to their specializations) and scan the boldface headings to locate the specialization that matches your work. If you write haiku, for instance, check under **Form/Style**. If you're an older adult who writes about the woods near your home, check under both **Senior Citizen** and **Nature/Rural/Ecology** and write down the names of publishers that sound interesting.

Publishers may classify themselves as **Regional** in the Subject Index, but checking the Geographical Index is also helpful. There you'll discover the publishers located in your state or country. While some don't consider themselves "regional" in terms of the poetry they accept, they are often more open to writers from their own areas.

Also useful, particularly if you're trying to publish a small collection of poems, is the Chapbook Publishers Index, which lists publishers who consider chapbook manuscripts (typically 20 to 25 pages of poetry connected by a theme). You'll find more information about both chapbook and book publishing in Charting Your Path to Poetry Publication, on page 11.

Finally, if you've heard about a particular publisher, but can't seem to find its listing, check the General Index. All imprints and publications located at the same address are grouped together. The General Index lists *all* titles in the book, however, and includes cross-references where necessary.

## CHECK MARKET CODES

Once you have a list of possible markets for your work—because of specialization or location or an interest in chapbooks—look up each listing and check the market category code(s) following the title to discover how open it is to submissions.

Besides a **IV** code, a publisher can also have **I**, **II**, **III** or **V**. Those with **I** are open to beginners' submissions, so if you're just starting out, try sending to them. Publishers with **II** codes are general markets which expect you to be familiar with literary journals and magazines. Those

coded **III** are limited as to the number of submissions they accept, so your chances of publishing with them are limited too. Finally, those with **V** are not accepting unsolicited manuscripts. Although you may have picked such a publisher out of the Geographical Index, you can't submit your poetry to it at this time. That's okay. Cross it off your list and move on to the next one.

When you discover publishers with more than one code, read their listings to determine if they're still possible markets for your work. For instance, a publisher may be **I, IV-Religious**, which means it either wants religious material as well as poetry from beginners or religious material only, including poetry from beginners. To learn more about market category codes, see the Publishers of Poetry introduction.

Also, as you read the listings based on the indexes, others will attract your eye. Don't feel limited by those on your list. Many publications don't want to be noted for a specialization and are open to ALL types of work.

## READ CAREFULLY

When you've refined your list of possible markets by checking market categories, study each listing *carefully*. You will be able to narrow your search further by investigating the publications' specific needs, advice, formats and payment. All this is included in the listings in a certain order, allowing you to easily locate specific material.

Quickly scanning the listings you will notice two features: some listings have icons and all listings have boldface. Listings new to this edition are indicated with a ‡, Canadian listings have a ♣, and international markets are designated with a \*. To help find something quickly within the listings themselves, certain information is set off in **boldface**. The following paragraphs will tell you what will consistently appear in bold.

After any icons and the name and address of the publication, you'll find the year it was founded. Older publishers have more stability, and sometimes more prestige. However, newer publishers, especially those new to this edition, are often more receptive to submissions. Next is the contact name(s), to whom you should specifically send your poems. This contact is always subject to change. We recommend obtaining a sample copy and verifying the contact on the masthead, or calling the publishers' offices to verify the contact person.

The publication's frequency of appearance follows along with its general description, purpose and contents. Pay attention to this latter information. For example, *Hellas* accepts any kind of poetry but especially welcomes poems in meter. In their listing, they say, "We prize elegance and formality in verse, but specifically encourage poetry of the utmost boldness and innovation, so long as it is not willfully obscurantist; . . ." The needs, in boldface, follow stating what the editors want and don't want. Often this is a direct quote and can give you extra insight into the editors' preferences.

In some listings, following this basic information, we've added our own editorial comment, set off by a bullet (●). This allows us to pass on additional inside information we've learned about the listing. Included here are tips about the market's biases, focus and any unusual aspects. For example, here is the editorial comment for *Blind Man's Rainbow*:

- This is a poetry and art zine; rough but containing some interesting work.

Next is a list of poets the market has published. In addition, listings will often include sample poetry lines. These will indicate what level of writing an editor is seeking and provide insight into editorial tastes. You'll also find the physical description of the publication including the number of pages, size, modes of printing, binding, cover, and whether it includes art, graphics and ads. Carefully reading the description of a publication's format will help you visualize how your poetry will appear in its pages.

When available, the listings indicate how many poems they receive a year, and their approximate acceptance rate. The listing will then detail the press run, number of subscribers (including how many are libraries), shelf sales and to whom it is distributed free. Prices for a single copy,

subscription and sample copy are given. The price for the sample copy is in boldface for easy location, and if guidelines are included with the sample, this is indicated. (Obtaining sample copies, often available from your local library or bookstore, is the best way to determine whether your poetry is right for a publication.) For example:

They receive about 300 poems a year, use approximately 15%. Press run is 650 for 500 subscribers of which 10 are libraries, 100 shelf sales. Single copy: \$4.50; subscription: **\$15. Sample (including guidelines) postpaid: \$3.50.**

The succeeding information, submission requirements, may be the most important in the listing and is therefore in boldface. We suggest you follow the requirements for submission carefully. Inappropriate submissions will not only leave a bad impression of your work, but they can also affect a publisher's willingness to accept unsolicited manuscripts from others. You will notice some markets have told us they accept disk or e-mail submissions. Although some listings have included e-mail and fax numbers, it is always best to get permission before submitting to a publisher by fax or e-mail.

Here is how submission information for a magazine might look:

**Submit up to 5 poems at a time. Charges reading fee of \$1/poem. No previously published poems; simultaneous submissions OK. Cover letter required with brief biographical information. E-mail submissions OK. Reads submissions September through June only.**

Next is information about their selection process: time between acceptance and publication; if poems are circulated to an editorial board (in boldface); and whether they comment on rejections (in boldface). If they publish theme issues, this is also included (in boldface). The listing will tell you how to obtain guidelines, whether by sending a SASE or requesting via e-mail, website or fax. If they do have theme issues we will tell you whether the guidelines include the upcoming themes; also, if available, the upcoming themes are given here in the listing.

How soon they report on submissions, whether they send prepublication galleys, what they pay and what rights they buy or acquire are indicated in bold. If the magazine accepts reviews of books or writes their own, and if poets may send books for review consideration, this is included. This information may appear as:

**Reports in 6 weeks. Always sends prepublication galleys. Pays 2 copies. Acquires first North American serial rights.** Reviews books of poetry in 200 words, multi-book format. Open to unsolicited reviews. Poets may also send books for review consideration.

If the listing offers other venues of publishing, like books or chapbooks, this information will follow the specifics for the magazine. Like the magazines, the book/chapbook needs, requirements, formats and pay will be detailed.

Listings end with news on any contests they sponsor and any contests or awards they or the poetry they publish has won. The market's listing closes with a very important feature: advice. This is perhaps the best way to meet and evaluate editors without actually corresponding with them. Their comments can reveal their editorial biases as well as quirks in their personalities. For example, an editor's advice may read: "Don't even think about submitting poems about your dog," or "Send me that dusty poem that's been at the back of your junk drawer, I will most likely find a place for it in my magazine!"

If you haven't already done so, read *Charting Your Path to Poetry Publication*. It offers a step-by-step approach to every aspect of the submission process. Many publishers offer guidelines for a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE). Send for them. The goal, after all, is to increase—not decrease—your chances of acceptance.



## OTHER RESOURCES

As you develop your craft, take advantage of the various resources for poets. For support services and feedback from others, for example, join one of the groups listed in Organizations Useful to Poets. If you're searching for a place to get away and write, check Writing Colonies. Or, if you're seeking instruction and marketing tips, attend one of the events in Conferences and Workshops or consult one of the magazines listed in Publications Useful to Poets.

If you wish to write for greeting card companies, *Writer's Market* (Writer's Digest Books) has a whole section dedicated to these companies complete with contact names, addresses, phone numbers, needs and submission requirements. For poets who are also lyricists, *Songwriter's Market* (Writer's Digest Books) offers pages and pages of opportunities in this field. Both books are available through your library or bookstore, or can be ordered directly from the publisher.

Finally, if you don't recognize a symbol or an abbreviation being used, refer to the Key to Symbols on page 20 or the Glossary of Listing Terms on page 559. If the publisher is looking for a specific style or form of which you are not familiar, the Glossary of Poetic Forms and Styles is on page 558. And, for easy reference, you will find a list of U.S. and Canadian Postal Codes below.

## U.S. and Canadian Postal Codes

### United States

AL	Alabama	MI	Michigan
AK	Alaska	MN	Minnesota
AZ	Arizona	MS	Mississippi
AR	Arkansas	MO	Missouri
CA	California	MT	Montana
CO	Colorado	NE	Nebraska
CT	Connecticut	NV	Nevada
DE	Delaware	NH	New Hampshire
DC	District of Columbia	NJ	New Jersey
FL	Florida	NM	New Mexico
GA	Georgia	NY	New York
GU	Guam	NC	North Carolina
HI	Hawaii	ND	North Dakota
ID	Idaho	OH	Ohio
IL	Illinois	OK	Oklahoma
IN	Indiana	OR	Oregon
IA	Iowa	PA	Pennsylvania
KS	Kansas	PR	Puerto Rico
KY	Kentucky	RI	Rhode Island
LA	Louisiana	SC	South Carolina
ME	Maine	SD	South Dakota
MD	Maryland	TN	Tennessee
MA	Massachusetts	TX	Texas
		UT	Utah

VT	Vermont
VI	Virgin Islands
VA	Virginia
WA	Washington
WV	West Virginia
WI	Wisconsin
WY	Wyoming

### Canada

AB	Alberta
BC	British Columbia
LB	Labrador
MB	Manitoba
NB	New Brunswick
NF	Newfoundland
NT	Northwest Territories
NS	Nova Scotia
ON	Ontario
PEI	Prince Edward Island
PQ	Quebec
SK	Saskatchewan
YT	Yukon

# Trends in the Field: Internet Opportunities for Poets

BY CHANTELLE BENTLEY

My first suggestion, in regard to the Internet, is to have a good book of poetry to read while you surf, or is it wade, through its many sites. And that is not a reproach of the system. The truth is, depending on the speed of your computer's modem, a lot of time is spent waiting for the Net to locate websites, connect to them, and upload the documents and graphics. In fact, during one trip onto the Internet while researching this article, I was able to read through a printed article and pay my monthly bills in between reviewing various electronic publications.

But all the information and connections available on the Internet are what make it such a valuable resource despite the traffic (people utilizing the Net) impeding quick access. Just one query for the word "poetry" on any of the search engines provides a list of more than 10,000 related sites. And all those sites are linked to other sites so you can spend all day weaving in and out, completely losing yourself in an electronic haze.

Having "come around" to the wonderful world of the Internet rather recently—it's amazing how scary a plastic box with a TV screen and telephone hookup can be—my initial experiences with the Web and all its properties were viewed with the eyes of a print-bound skeptic. And while I will never relinquish the desire to hold a book in my hands and turn it page by page while sitting in my favorite chair, I must admit the information provided by the Internet tempts me as well as any library or bookstore can.

## GET CONNECTED

But what if you don't currently have access to the Internet? How do you determine if it's worth the time and money? Well, if you already own a computer with a modem, you can sample the various Internet providers through trial memberships to their services. Most providers offer one-month introductory memberships with, typically, ten hours online free of charge. Then you must pay a monthly fee for a specified number of online hours with additional hours charged at a lesser hourly rate. Also, check local advertisements or the telephone directory to find local Internet providers. Local providers offer direct access to the Internet for a flat monthly fee—the telephone company is a good example and the fee is added right to your phone bill.

Another way to sample the Net is to visit your local library. Many libraries maintain computers with Internet access within their facilities for library patrons. For those poets not yet possessing a computer, this is a particularly good way to access the Internet. The only problem with using the library's computer is time and availability. The limited number of computers with Internet access compared to the number of users often results in long waits for a computer and short amounts of time in which to utilize the service.

If you have a good friend with a computer and Internet access, you may want to investigate trading computer time for some other service you can provide, such as proofreading manuscripts, babysitting or even a free dinner. In fact, if you know someone who is willing to share their computer maybe you can split Internet service costs. But regardless of the method you choose for getting to know the Net, the most important step is to get online and see what's there.

## FIND WHAT YOU SEEK

Once you have access to the Internet, you will need to become familiar with the various methods for searching/wading through the information. My favorite search engine is Yahoo! (<http://www.yahoo.com>), a subject-oriented directory with connections to more than 100,000 different sites. When searching for a keyword, Yahoo! looks through every category, title or comment in its database to find listings that match the key. Then the results are presented in an alphabetized list of categories ranging from art and humanities to government to regional to society and culture. Clicking on these categories brings up the end-sites within the categories matching the keyword.

A larger but less organized search engine is Alta Vista (Yahoo! is actually powered by Alta Vista). Alta Vista has access to 31 million pages found on 627,000 servers and four million articles from 14,000 Usenet news groups. In fact, a recent search for the word "poetry" in Alta Vista yielded 400,000 matches. The only problem with Alta Vista is the sites are presented individually and not methodically arranged. Therefore you must search through pages and pages of sites matching the keyword to find those of interest to you.

Becoming proficient at searching on the Internet is just a matter of learning about the various search engines and their search options. A number of introductory guides to the Internet and books on Internet researching have been published which may help you refine your skills. These books also provide lists of useful websites you might not find on your own. Some even guide you through establishing your own website. Look for these titles at your local library or bookstore or order directly through the publishers: *The Little Web Book*, by Alfred & Emily Glossbrenner (Peachpit Press, 1996); *Zen and the Art of the Internet*, by Brendan Kehoe (Prentice Hall, 1996); *The Internet Research Guide*, by Timothy K. Maloy (Allworth Press, 1996); and *Re-searching on the Internet*, by Robin Rowland & Dave Kinnaman (Prima Publishing, 1995). For a guide to the Internet actually on the Internet, see The Electronic Frontier Foundation's website at <http://www.eff.org/>.

## ONLINE RESOURCES FOR POETS

As you weave your way through the wires, you may discover the Internet offers poets not only alternative places to read and publish poetry but also alternative resources, such as online writing workshops, sites offering online critiques, access to poetry and writing organizations and electronic bookstores. One resource of particular value to poets seeking publication are electronic directories. These directories contain lists of journals and zines published or providing information on the Internet or Web.

These electronic directories are updated frequently and provide direct links to the listed publications. Some also act as search engines by providing a list of keywords from which you can search for journals on a particular topic. Literary organizations and authors' home pages may also be contained on these lists. In fact, U.S. poet laureate Robert Pinsky's online journal *Slate* (actually, he's the poetry editor, not the publisher) can be found within these e-directories—for a shortcut go to <http://www.slate.com>.

The publishers of these directories are always on the lookout for new listings. So, if your favorite e-zine is not contained in their directory, you can e-mail the information to be included with the next update. (See Websites of Interest to Poets on page 556 for the website addresses of some e-directories and other electronic resources related to poetry.)

## PUBLISH VIA THE NET

Now that you've found your way onto the electronic information superhighway, ruined your eyesight during all-night sessions of web browsing and, finally, narrowed the thousands of e-zines to those which suit your style and interests, the next decision is whether or not to submit your poems for electronic publication. Deciding to send your poems flying over the billions of



electrons known as the Internet can be difficult since, for most people, the Internet remains a somewhat unknown and volatile entity.

When comparing the submitting and publishing process in electronic publications to that in print publications, you'll find the risks do not change all that much—in some areas, in fact, they improve in the electronic arena.

First, let's consider quality. Many a complaint has been heard from poets unhappy with the quality of a print publication in which their work appears. And, unfortunately, many of these poets were unable to purchase copies of these journals before submitting, so they had no concept of the journal's format until after receiving their contributor's copies. This problem is alleviated when submitting to electronic publications. Unless the editor drastically changes her e-zine's format from the time you view the website to the time your work is published, what you see is what you get. And though not all e-publications are infused with gorgeous graphics, most are very eye-catching. Even the more plain e-journals are not the source of embarrassment for poets that some of the lesser-quality print journals can be.

A second consideration is acceptance rate. Typically, a poet's work has a greater chance of being accepted for electronic publication. Electronic journals accept approximately five poems for every one poem accepted by print journals. Electronic editors are not prohibited by page count or printing costs. However, as more poets become acquainted with the Internet, these editors may find their submission numbers soaring over their print counterparts, once again translating into difficulty getting published for poets. Until that occurs, however, poets can enjoy the ease of publishing on the Internet and the worldwide audience it provides.

Not only does the Internet provide poets with an international audience, it also provides them with a world's worth of advice. Publishing work on the Net allows for readers' critiques to reach you with the push of a button. This instantaneous global commentary can help prepare emerging poets for the more exacting and critical world of printed publications. For those poets already established in the print medium, e-publication gives a wider exposure to their work and may boost the sales of printed collections.

## **TAKE E-SUBMISSIONS SERIOUSLY**

Poets need to be mindful of proper submission policies when submitting to e-publications. Electronic editors require the same professionalism as print editors—the medium does not change the personalities. And regardless of the publication method, reading a journal's guidelines prior to submission is always a good idea. For advice specific to Internet submissions, read the article "Submitting on the Internet" located at website <http://www.writerswrite.com/submits.htm>.

For those using the Internet not as an alternative publishing venue but as a resource aiding publication in printed journals, many paper journals are also beginning to publish online versions. And though most print journals' online versions only contain the contents page and a few sample poems, they do provide potential contributors with a taste of the type of work sought. Print journals may also publish their submission guidelines on the Internet or accept information requests, queries or submissions via e-mail. Before submitting via the Internet, always check with the publisher in regard to their electronic submission policies.

Also, as most electronic editors are more open to previously published work, the Internet extends publishing possibilities for those with work already included in a print medium. However, poets should keep in mind that the reverse is rarely true and that e-zines will acquire first North American serial rights if the work has not been previously published.

## **PROTECT COPYRIGHTS ONLINE**

Most issues, in regard to rights, are the same when publishing on the Internet as they are when publishing through standard print methods. Even though lawmakers are still working through the details of electronic copyright issues, intellectual property right laws protect your work from the time it is preserved in a tangible form, whether that form be electronic or paper.

Though the ease of copying work online may hamper some poets' enthusiasm for the electronic medium, the fact is plagiarism can occur in any medium. Until electronic copyright issues are defined, the best advice is: if it doesn't feel right, don't do it. Only publish in a medium if you feel comfortable with all its advantages *and* disadvantages.

## BE ADVISED

But you needn't only consider my opinions when determining whether or not to utilize the Internet. This year the editors and publishers listed in *Poet's Market* were asked to share their views about the Internet and the opportunities it offers them and poets in general. As the comments below indicate, some see mostly benefits for poets publishing work on the Internet while others see only problems. Read all views, then decide what best suits you and your work.

"The original mission of *The Peking Duck* was primarily one of providing a free, non-profit, literary newsletter to as many readers as possible. To this end, the Internet is like a dream come true. Not only is it far cheaper to publish electronically, but online access allows our potential readership to grow from a few hundred people to millions worldwide. In this way we all benefit. . . . Will there be negatives associated with a multimedia approach to poetry? Of course, but I believe the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages. Moreover, it is important those of us committed to quality literature and the small independent press movement stake our claim in this exciting new medium."

—Edward Cossett, *The Peking Duck*

"The Internet is nothing other than a different medium for data exchange. It may allow wider access/more readers for a particular poet or poem, but it has no effect on the writing of a good poem—the creative process, the value of the work, or the impact the poem has on the reader."

—D. Clement, *Fauquier Poetry Journal*

"The opportunities offered by the Internet to an editor/publisher are extraordinary. Foremost are the low cost and maintenance of an existing website. Secondly, one has the ability to make changes to a website/e-zine on-the-fly. An editor can add poetry, delete poetry or change a website/e-zine even while visitors are perusing the site's contents. Thirdly, the exposure the website receives is universal rather than the provincial exposure that usually encompasses a magazine's distribution area. In short, the Internet offers a wide and diversified set of tools for managing, collaborating and manipulating your material. A diversification that also extends itself to your contributors, subscribers and visitors from around the globe."

—William Rothwell, *The Poet's Attic Quarterly*

"It's an advantage to see the emergence of various forms of poetry on the Internet. The disadvantages seem to be the prevalent placement of purely poor poetry."

—Jeffrey Hillard, *Cincinnati Poetry Review*

"Overall, the Internet can be a very exciting place for poets, publishers, and lovers of literature. We're just beginning to see the potential of the Internet and I'm fairly sure the online poetry world will continue to thrive and grow. As a poet, the Net offers true global exposure of your material and access to easy electronic submissions. For the publisher, it offers a low-cost alternative to traditional print publications, and exposure to audiences beyond the geographical boundaries. Finally, for the readers, the Internet, and specifically the World Wide Web, offers a wealth of free material never before available."

—Erik Jensen, *Black Cross Magazine*

"Like the TV, I think the Internet may discourage reading. I would rather have my poems on the bookshelf in my library where my grandchildren can read them."

—Denver Stull, *Parnassus Literary Journal*

# Charting Your Path to Poetry Publication

BY CHANTELLE BENTLEY

Though the importance of poetry exists within its creation, publication brings the art full circle and provides the poet with a sense of completion. Placing your work before an audience validates the effort and time spent on the writing and silences, for a while anyway, the internal and external critics telling you to “give up.”

The daunting task in publishing your work is wading through volumes of information on the subject. And, if you are like me, finding the time to write is challenging enough. However, knowing the ins and outs of the field is important, just as not knowing them may affect your chances of being published.

In the following paragraphs I have tried to lay out the essentials you need to know to get your work, first, into the hands of editors and then, essentially, into the pages of their journals and books. This information covers the most-asked questions about submitting poetry for those just beginning to submit their poems and provides updates for poets more experienced with the submission process.

## **Question 1: How do I locate editors and publishers who might be interested in my work?**

The first step toward finding an editor or publisher to publish your poetry is to determine where your work fits in the market. For example, does your work focus on a particular theme or topic? Do you write in a certain form or style? Does your poetry have a regional or ethnic flair? Any distinguishing aspects you can assign to your work will help you narrow your focus and locate potential markets. And, sharing common ground with the editors and publishers to whom you submit gives you a leg up on the competition. (To locate markets with shared interests, see the Subject Index at the back of this book.)

After you have selected some publications specializing in your areas of interest, read several sample issues to determine whether your poetry is appropriate for their pages. You may even want to try submitting work to the publications to which you subscribe or purchase frequently from the newsstand. After all, you are already familiar with their contents and you probably have a lot in common with their readers.

Another way to locate markets that may be open to your poetry is to determine which journals and presses have published the work of some of your favorite contemporary poets. Chances are your poetry and the work of poets you most admire share some essential aspects of craft, tone or topic. And, perhaps, the editors of those journals will be attracted to the same aspects in your work.

An important thought to keep in mind as you submit your poems is to start small. Very few true “overnight successes” exist in this business or in any other business. Many poets spend years publishing work in small local or regional journals before they ever make it into the nationally-known publications.

And the same goes with presses. The two-person small press operation that published the collection of the poet you heard read at the bookstore on the corner last week is just as serious and dedicated to the craft of poetry as those publishers in New York with staffs of interns wading