

CASCAIDA review

CATEGORY ARCHIVES: CIARA SHUTTLEWORTH

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by ciara shuttleworth



FEATURED POET: CAROL SHILLIBER

A significant contour in Carol Shilliber's life is the distance between a family house in Wellpinit, on the Spokane Indian Reservation, and the East Vancouver coffee house she sits in while writing this. A lot of the action in the poems published here comes from traversing the roads between these 2 places. When she wrote "Carpenter Road Fire Takes Lives", she was sitting in a little 4-corner café just outside the Reservation limits. She had travelled there for a family member's death ceremony; to sit there watching the mountain burn, and people in cars flee. "Border running" was written about one of the narrow little roads traversing the international boundary, a little road full of human history. It was, for example, used by rum runners during prohibition. It is still used to bring goods both ways, by all kinds of people, many of whom don't declare what they're bringing, in and out, in and out. And then there's the rain poem. It was written in a glass house, in a Vancouver rain storm. It was then (upon reading a poet that Shilliber now thinks of as The Rain King) that she realized that she thinks of poetry (and poets) that write the gentle ode to the unappreciated self as rain (drops), and there she was under its mass, its heavy wet publishing darkness. She has to admit that she's not a fan of such odes. Partly that's because she's from the groundwater cohort. Those folks don't often fall gently, longing for the deep white heavenly swirl of cloud that no longer holds them close. For the same reason of difference, she feels more at home running down the stark rock scars leading off the Palouse down to the Snake River than she does in the gentle flood zone which is Richmond BC. Not that one place is better than the other. It's more that she is formed more like the scarred face of the basalt flow than the relatively gentle deposition of broken