

Myopia in the Afternoon

What landscape is this? My flesh curving

over your bones, pectoral swell

under my cheek, darkness of tangled fur,

and beyond that, the wet

angled branch of a tree, and beyond that,

something white, something pale blue.

Call it tree and window,

sky and snow.

But what this is, so close at hand, I cannot say.

This landscape of pleasure, where we fit together

this way, that way, it seems is nothing

I know, knew, can know –

only the rise and fall of breath,

the slow shifting of light on flesh,

and what has been, and what will come to be,

and here between them,

this.

Ruth Thompson



Ruth Thompson grew up in California and received a BA from Stanford and a PhD from Indiana University. She was an English professor, librarian, college dean, and yoga teacher in Los Angeles, and now lives in Hilo, Hawai'i and Colden, New York, where she teaches writing, meditation, and yoga. Her poems have won the New Millennium Writings Poetry Award and the Harpur Palate Milton Kessler Memorial Prize. *Woman with Crows*, to be published by WordTech Communications in August, is her second book of poetry. It was a finalist for the A Room of Her Own Foundation's To The Lighthouse Prize. *Here Along Cazenovia Creek* (Saddle Road Press, 2011), was among The Scrapper Poet's "best chapbooks of 2011" and is the basis of a collaborative performance of poetry and dance with Japanese dancer Shizuno Nasu.