

Lenard Moore blasts off with his new St. Andrews press publication, Forever Home

by Tyler McPeck

Lenard D. Moore is the author of Forever Home, a recent St. Andrews Press publication. This collection, already in its second printing, features an impressive forward by Guy Davenport and afterward by Fred Chappell. In Forever Home, Moore draws on the beautiful landscapes and unique character of North Carolina, to offer the reader his Japanese-like style of poetry in a book of three sections. Guy Davenport, in his introduction to the book, explains Moore's connection to North Carolina, "A sensual truth of locality sustains [Moore]...through Moore we realize that we are being shown a particular place by a poet whose soul lives there...A poem's geography is, in both senses of the word, its ground...the poet must have his place that he feels he belongs to...He has chosen to keep to a great purity of purpose, the native identity of the place on earth that shaped his mind and heart." This is the essential truth of Moore's writing. He has chosen the "purity of purpose," that Davenport describes. It is a common theme in literature to, "write about what you know." Moore's adherence to "what he knows," reflects a

genuine sincerity in his lines.

"Only roots survive/
harsh weather. chill, frost/
reaches everywhere./ Corn-
stalks absorb each slim sun
shaft." This passage is from a
poem, in the first section of his
book, entitled, "Piney Ridge In
Autumn." It is not surprising
to discover that Moore is a stu-
dent of Basho, a medieval Japa-
nese poet. His close-cropped
lines, concise and condensed
thought, and constant reference
to nature and the seasons, are
dead giveaways of a student of
Japanese poetry.

Moore divides his
book into three basic sections:
"The Homeplace," "Heat," and
"Breaking Ground." Each of
these sections contain poems of
similar styles, but with different
moods. In the section entitled
"The Homeplace," I would cite
"The Homeplace" as one poem
of great value to the entire book.
It echoes the themes of Moore's
poetry perfectly: geography,
self, and nature (specifically
land). The poem closes "we are
this fresh green world/ which
cradles everything into itself."

In the "Heat" section
the reader encounters, in part,
poems that stress family and
heritage. In the poem, "Telling

of Tales,' Moore writes of a
grandfather telling tales to the
young. Still, the strong natural
overtones are ever present,
"Honeysuckle sway,/ scent the
air."

In the "Breaking

Ground' section, a rather impor-
tant poem, is encountered:
"Breakfast, Then Chores." I
would argue that this poem is
significant because it is the only
poem in this collection that var-
ies from the tight Japanese style
that is characteristic to Moore.
This poem uses, for the most
part, dialogue, then closes with
a short, characteristically natu-
ral, stanza of three lines. This
poem indicates that Moore is
not confined to the style in
which most of these poems are
written.

Those present at Writ-
ers' Forum on Thursday, the
24th, were fortunate enough to
see Lenard Moore in action. He
not only read some favorites
from his book, he also shared a
number of performance poems,
inviting the audience to join in.
He also read some of his ac-

claimed Haiku, which have won
him several awards, making him
possibly the best contemporary
American Haiku writer. With a
black belt in karate and cases
full of basketball and track tro-
phies, Moore is more than a
great poet. He is also a great
athlete. He presented a basket-
ball challenge to anyone in the
audience, taunting, "I pity any-
one who challenges me in bas-
ketball." Indeed, Lenard Moore
is a jack of all trades. He at-
tributes his accomplishments
thus far to his three P's: persis-
tence, patience, and prayer. He
suggests that beginning writers
always be writing, never limit
themselves, and don't make ex-
cuses. One thing is for sure,
Lenard Moore is going to keep
writing. So keep your eyes
peeled, we're sure to see more
from Lenard Moore.

Poet Lenard Moore reciting his poetry at the Fortner Writers' Forum

Photo by Rooney Coffman

A View In Silverdale

In wind and rain I go
across a stubbled field
where crows have scattered corn
a summer's endless yield
-Lenard D. Moore