



"Willow Path" Copyright 2000 Rain Jordan

The Orgasms of Organisms

Above the lawn the wild beetles mate
and mate, skew their tough wings
and join. They light in our hair,
on our arms, fall twirling and twinning
into our laps. And below us, in the grass,
the bugs are seeking each other out,
antennae lifted and trembling, tiny legs
scuttling, then the infinitesimal
ahs of their meeting, the awkward joy
of their turnings around. O end to end
they meet again and swoon as only bugs can.
This is why, sometimes, the grass feels electric
under our feet, each blade quivering, and why
the air comes undone over our heads
and washes down around our ears like rain.
But it has to be spring, and you have to be
in love--acutely, painfully, achingly in love--
to hear the black-robed choir of their sighs.

from *Smoke*
BOA Editions, 2000

Dust

Someone spoke to me last night,
told me the truth. Just a few words,
but I recognized it.
I knew I should make myself get up,
write it down, but it was late,
and I was exhausted from working
all day in the garden, moving rocks.
Now, I remember only the flavor--
not like food, sweet or sharp.
More like a fine powder, like dust.
And I wasn't elated or frightened,
but simply rapt, aware.
That's how it is sometimes--
God comes to your window,
all bright light and black wings,
and you're just too tired to open it.

from *What We Carry*
BOA Editions, 1994
Dorianne Laux

Dorianne Laux is the author of three collections of poetry: *Awake* (1990), *What We Carry* (1994)--finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award--and *Smoke* (2000), all from BOA Editions. She is also co-author, with Kim Addonizio, of *The Poet's Companion: A Guide to the Pleasures of Writing Poetry* (W.W. Norton, 1997) which has been chosen as an alternative selection by Book of the Month Club, Quality Paperbacks and Writer's Digest. Among her awards are a Pushcart Prize for poetry and a fellowship from The National Endowment for the Arts. Recent poems have appeared in *The Harvard Review*, *The Alaska Quarterly Review*, and *The Best American Poetry 1999*. Her poetry can also be heard on National Public Radio's "The Writer's Almanac," hosted by Garrison Keillor. Laux is an Associate Professor and works at the University of Oregon's Program in Creative Writing.