

## Lawrence Kessenich

### Pulse

Like an old friend whispering,  
each beat of my heart whooshes  
in my right ear, a little breeze,  
a tiny waterfall, a small announcement  
of mortality. It started  
a few years ago. The doctor  
says there's nothing to be done.  
It lisps through my morning  
meditation, echoes softly  
on my pillow at night.  
Ambient noise drowns it, so I  
forget sometimes it's there,  
until the world grows quiet  
and the gentle sound returns,  
comforting as a contented cat  
purring on my shoulder.

**Lawrence Kessenich** won the 2010 Strokestown International Poetry Prize. His poetry has been published in *Atlanta Review*, *Poetry Ireland Review*, *Cream City Review*, *Istanbul Review*, *Ibbetson Street*, and many other magazines. His chapbook *Strange News* was published by Pudding House Publications in 2008. In 2012, his poem "Underground Jesus" was nominated for a Pushcart Prize. His first full-length book, *Before Whose Glory*, is being published by FutureCycle Press in spring 2013. Kessenich has also published essays – one of which was featured on NPR's *This I Believe* in 2010 and appears in the anthology *This I Believe: On Love* – and he has had two plays produced.