

Robert Estes – Two Poems

Small Boy with *Nature Morte*

Out on
the weathered gray steps
by the cistern:
a pile of feathered creatures
of the air and water
bounty of my uncle's duck hunt:
mallard and canvasback
I'd never beheld
such beauty
I sat with them
and ran a forefinger
over the sheen
of sun-dusk-red
and shimmer-green
supernal smoothness
of their sculptured heads
stroking them
over and again
and still

Message Delivered

On the day we buried Mama,
when we were outside
back at the old house at dusk,
two mockingbirds,
as though in competition,
performed a sonic version of a
fireworks display finale.
They stopped at nightfall,
as if by signal.
Then, from across the road
and way deep in the woods,
there came, at intervals
of a few seconds,
the barely audible calls
of a lone whippoorwill.

Robert Estes, who lives in Somerville, Massachusetts, got his PhD in Physics at UC Berkeley and had some interesting times doing physics, especially on a couple of US-Italian Space Shuttle missions. His poems have appeared in *Third Wednesday* and *Constellations*.