

TAKE HEART

A Conversation in Poetry

*Edited & Introduced by Wesley McNair,
Maine Poet Laureate*

One evening amidst the silence of an artists' retreat in rural Ireland, Mekeel McBride of Kittery suddenly heard faint, distinct music from a room below -- "a sweet, odd shock," she writes, that made her feel as if the music came from everything around her, "intrinsic and also completely otherworldly."

Strauss and Cows of Ireland

by Mekeel McBride

From my room at dusk I watch
the cows in their late graze.
Great clouds of gnats hang over
them, gauzy as a bride's bouquet.
Downstairs, a radio.
Soprano's aria swells
so delicate and pure
it must be unrequited love
but just what the opera is
I can't tell from here,
though later learn: Strauss,
Der Rosenkavalier.
Cows continue to drift
the dusky pasture, luminous,
as if fed on candlelight
instead of grass. They pass
with heavy gentleness, now
and then stopping to lean toward
our windows with little regard
for human arias that reach them
though it conducts
through me a sweetness:
distant opera and the wandering
of star-tiaraed cows in darkness.

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