

Critique by Mindy C. Reiser, Ph.D.

Ruth:

I have very much enjoyed reading your recent poems -- as well as the 2020 poem focusing on COVID, its effect on everyday life in the present (then 2020) and its implications for the future -- what lessons will people take away from having lived through the experience of COVID.

An ongoing theme in your several new poems is reflection on the past -- through the prism of experiences, ties, objects; You call out the sustenance of transmission of both memories and objects across generations.

Another important focus of your poems (and your current life) is on our reliance on technology even in the form of a camera to capture a landscape, a "happening" we encounter, hoping that way to preserve it -- You underscore that this is not the same as our direct apprehension of that reality -- with our eyes, devoid of technological "assists."

I am also struck by your quest for lessons to be learned in examining our experiences -- what they teach about living a life of integrity, compassion and love -- and how to communicate these ways of being in the world to others dear to us -- as well as others somewhat further away.

The passage of time and how it transforms, enlarges how we view the unfolding of our lives is also an ongoing concern of yours, and movingly rendered, particularly in "A Set of Wooden Bowls" and "Reminiscing."

As always, you do a masterful job of bilingually conveying the rhyme and rhythm of your poems, still capturing their meaning and emotional resonance. And, talking about emotion -- in your description of the saga of the toaster-oven -- you well convey your frustration with both the change in the features of the object and the drain on you of having to remedy the failure in the production of the toaster-oven...
