



HOMEWORDS: A Project of the Poet Laureate of Kansas

By Wyatt Townley

This weekly poetry column explores the notion of “home” from micro to macro— from the mobile

home of the **body**, to the **house** it inhabits, to the **land** that holds the house, to the **sky** that enfolds it all.

In October, HomeWords will focus on **home as land**. More HomeWords submissions have been about “land” than about body, house, or sky—about a 3-to-1 ratio. I guess I’m not surprised. We are connected to the land here, and it feeds us on multiple levels.

Our poets have explored the expansive Kansas landscape using a tiny poem: the **American Cinquain**. Its 5 lines contain—in order—2, 4, 6, 8, and 2 syllables. **Kay Anderson** lives in Lenexa and credits Kansas public schools, from morning kindergarten through university, for

who she is today. I like how she plays with sound, rhyme, and repetition while making references to our state flower, motto, tree, and bird. The poem’s a lark!

*Sunflow’rs
Ad Astra stars
Cottonwood tree bark, bark
Greater Western Meadowlark, lark
All Ours*

Paul Dickey lives in Omaha but has deep Kansas roots. Born in Hardtner, he grew up in Wichita where he lived for over 30 years, graduating from Wichita State University. In this poem, he plays with land in quite a different way.

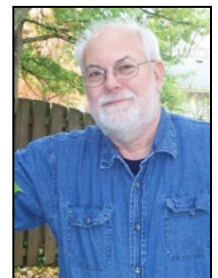
*Kansas
is a body
without definition
like playing baseball in the heart
of wheat.*

Poets and poets-to-be of all ages from across the state are invited to submit to *HomeWords*. For guidelines, visit www.kansashumanities.org.

The Kansas Humanities Council is a nonprofit organization that supports community-based cultural programs and encourages Kansans to engage in the civic and cultural life of their communities.



Poet Kay Anderson, Lenexa (with actress Morgan Fairchild)



Poet Paul Dickey, Omaha