

Jerry Jenkins

Jerry H. Jenkins' poems have appeared in numerous periodicals such as *The Formalist*, *The Lyric*, *Piedmont Literary Review*, *Mandrake Poetry Review*, *The New Formalist*, *Mobius*, and others, and have been anthologized in several collections, including *the Rhysling Anthology* of the Science-Fiction Poetry Association, and most recently *2001: A Science-Fiction Poetry Anthology* (Anamnesis Press). His poems have also appeared on leading-edge poetry sites on the internet, such as *The Able Muse*, *The Susquehanna Quarterly*, *The New Formalist*, *Terrain*, *Poetry Life and Times*, *Pyrowords*, *Eclectica*, *Octavo* and *La Petite Zine*. He has published three chapbooks: *Avian* (Anamnesis Press), *Candle* and *The Garden of the Sun* (Helionaut Press), and edited *Canoa Cheia/The Full Canoe*, a collection of haiku by the Brazilian poet Rosa Clement. He lives in Louisville, Kentucky.

Handful of Earth

after Neruda

I love the handful of the earth you are,
the secret valleys where your rivers course.
You are my world, my one and only star,
my model of the fruitful universe.
Your wide eyes are the only light I know
from constellations at the edge of sight.
They flash as half-seen meteors throbbing through
a rift in rain clouds, sudden, brief and bright.
You are the virgin moon's geographies,
your mouth the deeps of space; the fiery rays
of stars shine from your heart. Through honeyed days
and ardent nights, I trace cosmologies
and stellar maps across your burning form's
contours, my compact planet, sphere of storms.