



Goody Packet from Phyllis Cole-Dai, Host “Sacred Journeys” with Gloria Heffernan

This packet includes a few post-event goodies. All links, blue and underlined, are clickable. You’ll find:

- This link to the event replay on *The Raft*: <https://phylliscoledai.substack.com/p/watch-sacred-journeys-with-gloria>
- Book information for *Peregrinatio*
- Gloria’s contact information
- *Peregrinatio* poems presented during the event
- A three-part writing prompt
- Invitation to another event with Gloria
- A description of *The Raft*, my online community
- Opportunities for poets on *The Raft*
- A parting gift

One last thing—I’d love to hear from you anytime!

- [Website](#)
- [Email me](#)

All blessings! May you live and create from your true spot!\

Deep peace,

A vertical photograph of an Antarctic landscape. The top half shows a blue sky with wispy clouds. Below the sky is a range of snow-capped mountains with dark rock peaks. A large, flat expanse of snow or ice covers the middle ground. In the foreground, there is a dark, rocky shoreline with a small pool of water. The text is overlaid on the image in white serif font.

PEREGRINATIO

Poems for Antarctica

Gloria Heffernan

Peregrinatio: Poems for Antarctica

Copies may be purchased on Amazon.com at:

[Amazon.com: Peregrinatio: Poems for Antarctica: 9781639803491: Heffernan, Gloria: Books](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B000000000)

Or direct from Kelsay Books:

[Peregrinatio: Poems for Antarctica – Kelsay Books](http://www.kelsaybooks.com)

Visit the trailer at:

[Kelsay Books, Gloria Heffernan, Peregrinatio \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

Visit Gloria's website:

www.gloriaheffernan.wordpress.com

Entreaty

*In the end we will conserve only what we love;
We will love only what we understand;
And we will understand only what we have been taught.
--Baba Dioum*

Who am I to teach of Antarctica?
Who am I to say, "love this place"?
Who am I to plead
for a land so few will ever see?

I am a witness.
I am a trespasser.
I am one of privileged few who has walked
in the company of the Gentoo penguin
that hasn't yet learned to fear our kind.

I am a messenger,
back from the bottom of the world
and like Orpheus,
I can't help but look back
at that which I love
and fear will disappear.

I am a pilgrim,
Praying for the coldest place on Earth.
Praying that it will remain cold.
Praying that its creatures will prevail.
Praying that the land I love
will be safe from the likes of me.

Peregrinatio

My family crest depicts a whale
gliding west across the sea.
Is this the whale that sheltered St. Brendan
and his monks on their ancient voyage?

Today I am the voyager
perched on a rubber boat in the Southern Ocean,
one of a dozen onlookers gazing at a humpback whale
as she glides silently through the waves
then disappears

only to resurface moments later
close enough to touch -- though I don't dare.
But I wonder what she would do
if I slid silently over the side.

Would she invite me to board her broad back
like her ancestor who welcomed those monks?
When Brendan prayed for a miracle,
God sent a leviathan disguised as an island.

Is she my island as she resurfaces
emitting a sound deeper than the ocean—
a sonorous exhalation echoing the winds
that drove the monks across the Atlantic?

We are held in the rhythm of that breath—
embraced by the holy silence that surrounds it.
She pauses as if calling us to prayer
and in concert we all exhale as one.

In the stillness that follows,
I think of those monks
and imagine their sense of wonder
when the island on which they perched
issued forth such a breath.

As she disappears beneath the waves
I ponder my place in that ancient tradition—
peregrinatio,
the sacred voyage into the unknown
where miracles still abound.

Treaty

*(The Antarctic Treaty, signed by 12 nations in 1959, now includes 54 signatories.
The treaty will expire in 2041.)*

Antarctica has no seat
at the General Assembly.

No ambassador.

No citizenry.

No one with a passport
singing a national anthem
and brandishing a flag.

Antarctica is the schoolyard
where the kindergarten teacher
sent her pupils at recess and said,
“Go play nice with each other,”
And they did...

...in the name of science,
...in the name of nature,
...in the name of peace.

Antarctica is the real
United Nations.

Fifty-four of them,
signatories on a treaty
vowing cooperation,

No military presence,
No exploitation of resources,
No boundary lines.

Poems used in the *Peregrinatio* Trailer:

The Obligatory Penguin Poem

Okay, let's just get it out of the way.
They are impossibly cute.
Perhaps the hardest thing
about walking the beach at Half-Moon Island
is fighting the urge to pick one up
and snuggle it like a stuffed animal
(regardless of what it might have
to say about the embrace.)

And yes, they do stink.
There is no getting away from it
even though I chafe at the complaints
of pampered tourists (like me)
who whine about the odor
that clings to their red parkas
and borrowed boots.

And sure,
they are a noisy lot, gabbling incessantly
with an urgency that suggests
they do indeed have a message for us
if only we would put down our cameras
long enough to listen.

Oh, so easy to sentimentalize,
to romanticize
to anthropomorphize,
to close our eyes
to the fact that our very presence here
is a threat to their existence
no matter how hard we try
to rationalize.

The World Without Us

I have seen it, you know. And it is beautiful.
Infinite blue sky alive with petrels and albatross.
Endless blue water swarming with iridescent krill.
A continent some think desolate
brims with life at its most resilient.
Over eight million chinstrap penguins,
and not a single politician, Starbucks, or bank.
If someone asked you to imagine
the world without us,
you might think it empty and grim,
but the whales in Paradise Bay would beg to differ.
and the elephant seals lounging
on the beach at Half-Moon Island
would snore contentedly and never miss us.

Prompt: Conversations with Place

Take two minutes to look at the photo you brought. Don't write anything yet.

- a. Consider why you chose that photo of that place.
- b. What moment does this photo evoke?

Writing prompt:

Fold a sheet of paper in half.

Part 1:

In the lefthand column, write what you want to tell this place. What do you need to tell it? (Take ten minutes)

Don't worry about making it a poem. Just write from the heart about what you want the place to know.

Part 2:

In the righthand column, write what this place wants to tell you.

What does it need you to know? How does it feel? Is it sick or well? Does it remember you? Does it want something from you?

Part 3:

Begin drafting a poem based on column 1, column 2, or a conversation between the two.

Upcoming workshop with Gloria Heffernan:

Poetry as Legacy – Downtown Writers Center, presented on Zoom

April 10 – May 29, Wednesdays from 10:00-12:00

Cost: \$160

What stories do you want to leave behind for future generations? What stories from your family history do you want to preserve and pass down? In this generative workshop, we will write from prompts, read exemplary poems, and share work of our own that is written from the heart.

Registration information:

[Creative Writing Workshops | YMCA OF CENTRAL NEW YORK \(ymcacny.org\)](https://www.ymcacny.org/creative-writing-workshops)



ABOUT THE RAFT

Monday's event was hosted by [The Raft](#). On *The Raft*, we're all about trying to live from our "true spot," buoyed by the arts and spiritual practice. We believe that life is a creative practice. Many of us are also into making stuff, whether casually or professionally.

What's our "true spot"? Imagine it as an inner place of deep integrity, confidence, compassion, and joy.

Membership on *The Raft* is free. Some events require payment. Donations are welcome in order to keep *The Raft* afloat for everybody.

To learn about *Raft* offerings, [click here](#).

Significant opportunities for poets on *The Raft*

1. **Poetry Pick-Me-Up** (*Zoom, Thursdays, 12-1PM Central*). A casual group that celebrates poetry by reading aloud and discussing the work of others. [Details here](#).
2. **Deep Dives**. Immerse yourself several times a year in month-long exploration of particular "life themes" using poetry, music, contemplation, and/or other practices. [Details here](#).
3. **The Dig**. A set of writing prompts, usually emailed on the last Sunday of the month. You may respond to the prompts in whatever written form(s) tickles your fancy.
4. **Poets on The Raft** (*Zoom, every other Wednesday, 7-8:30PM Central*). Hosts: Annette Grunseth and Gloria Heffernan. Limited seats available. [Learn more here](#).

***Heads up!* Among other presenters, I'll be welcoming back Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer for several events on *The Raft* in 2024.**

[CLICK HERE TO HOP ABOARD THE RAFT!](#)

ONE FINAL GIFT

See the following pages, courtesy of my artist-friend Marie Altman. If you have access to a color printer or copier, print the sheets on regular paper or cardstock; cut the cards apart; and give them away, sprinkling light in the world.



Love Notes ~

Marie Altman

mariealtman@gmail.com

