

## SERINA ALLISON HEARN (1957 - )



Allison Hearn has been an active member of the poetry scene in Northeast Kansas for the last decade. She brings a traveler's experience to her writing, as she was born in Trinidad and is descended from Portuguese, Italian, African, British, and Chinese families. Besides her original home in Trinidad, she has lived in London, Paris, New York, Toronto, Princeton, and, since 1996, Lawrence. Her formal training is in art and design.

Hearn has written intermittently since she was a girl, she told a *Lawrence Journal World* reporter (2002), and she relates to the Kansas landscape because of its embodiment of time: "Kansas is the floor of an ancient sea." In her writings, she lives amidst sea stones, family stories, and Victorian houses, which she restores for a living. In "Yearly Restoration," an Ad Astra Poetry Contest winner, she delights in the names of commercial house paints: "Morning Mist," "Electric-Pink," "Evocative Sunlight," and "Frosted-Hawthorn." These are her present-day layerings of experience over an 1850s frame house. So she participates in history, as she heals damage to "kicked-in doors." This renewal becomes its own shade, "Good-As-New." The narrator suggests the "frat-boy parties" that recently ended and other stories, but this is a lyrical poem about sealing in the present, as though it could last through all years.

### YEARLY RESTORATION

I bought a bucket of Morning-Mist  
and painted the windows open.  
Electric-Pink that splattered the floor  
was patiently scraped with razor and rags  
until the oak grain shone.  
Evocative-Sunlight in multiple layers  
hid the bruise marks on the walls.  
Two emergency blankets of Ivory-Coast  
tenderly covered, mended, kicked-in-doors.  
Frosted-Hawthorn soothed in cross stitch brush strokes  
graffiti etchings from drunken KU frat-boy parties.  
The painted Victorian,  
built by 1850s Lawrence-Kansas pioneers  
stood, patiently, waiting for its wounds to heal.  
Next morning I brought a gallon  
of Good-As-New  
and sealed the front porch done.

**Education:** Allison Hearn was born and raised in Trinidad, where she graduated from high school. She attended St Martin's School of Art, London. She has lived in Lawrence since 1996.

**Career:** Hearn has published poems in journals such as *Coal City Review*, *I-70* and others. She published *Dreaming the Bronze Girl* (Mid-America Press 2002), a Kansas City Star Notable Book, and a second book is ready for publication. She has worked as a writer, illustrator, and fashion designer in Trinidad and London. She writes poetry and renovates Victorian houses in Lawrence.