Muriel Rukeyser, reading "Anemone" – Sir George Williams University, January 24, 1969

Katherine McLeod   September 26, 2019

Audio of the week, ShortCuts, SPOKENWEBLOG | 1969, Katherine McLeod, SGW Reading Series

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During her introductory remarks (featured in last week's Audio of the Week), poet Muriel Rukeyser asks the audience not only to raise their hands if they've ever written a poem but also to reflect upon what drives people to attend poetry readings in the first place. She speculates that people come and listen to poems because of embodied elements – the breathing, the heartbeat, the rhythms – and because of something else that is created while sharing a poem together. In her reading, there are poems in which one is acutely aware of being together, listening, even while listening to the recording. This poem is one of them: "Anemone" (*The Speed of Darkness*, 1968) – a poem that enacts Rukeyser's opening remarks by making the room at once oceanic and intimate, and by saying to the listener: "You are here."

Resources

Camlot, Jason and Christine Mitchell, eds. "The Poetry Series," *Amodern 4* (2015).

Malcolm, Jane. "The Poem Among Us, Between Us, There: Muriel Rukeyser's Meta-Poetics and the Communal Soundscape." *Amodern 4: The Poetry Series* (March 2015).

Katherine McLeod

Katherine McLeod researches and teaches Canadian literature through sound, performance, and archives. Her recent publications include a chapters in the books *Public Poetics: Critical Issues in Canadian Poetry and Poetics, Moving Archives* (Wilfrid Laurier UP), and *CanLit Across Media: Unarchiving the Literary Event* (MQUP), which she also co-edited with Jason Camlot. Currently, she is an Affiliate Assistant Professor in the Department of English at Concordia University, where she researches CBC Radio recordings and where she is organizing SpokenWeb's Ghost Reading Series.

Follow the site she curates for Montreal readings at WherePoetsRead.ca and @poetsread.

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