

## Poem/Art Odyssey Makes Its Final Stop This Week

Written by Jeff Ignatius  
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Click here for the full-color .pdf document of paintings and poems as part of the Poem/Art Odyssey. The concept behind the Poem/Art Odyssey is something like the game of Telephone, with a big twist. The interesting and innovative year-long program – which comes to an end with an event on Thursday – incorporated both visual and literary works into a journey from artist to artist.

The project of the Bettendorf Public Library started with a poem by Maine-based poet Robert Creeley, an author of more than 60 books who has earned a reputation for innovative ways he's collaborated with others. From there, the project moved to the Quad Cities area.

That poem was given to local artist Rachael Mullins, who produced a mixed-media work based on Creeley's poem. Mullins' artwork then became the inspiration for a poem by John R. Turner, and *his* poem prompted a painting by Sandra Turner.

The process continued for a full year. Over the course of 2001, the Poem/Art Odyssey sparked new work by six poets and six visual artists. This chain reaction of creation will be celebrated with a program on Thursday, April 4, at the Bettendorf Public Library. A reception starts at 6:30 p.m., with the program beginning at 7. The event will feature the unveiling of artwork, poetry reading, music, and refreshments.

You might imagine that the final painting, by Heather Eslick, is far removed from Creeley's poem, which invokes memories and reputations of the Quad Cities. But even though the project moved far afield of the original words, it came full circle, with a final mixed-media work that includes a hazy water view, just as Mullins' first painting does.

In addition to Creeley and Turner, poets Kathleen Lawless Cox, Rebecca Wee, Shellie Moore Guy, and Tracy Alan White contributed works. Visuals artists included Mullins, Turner, Bruce Walters, Glenn Boyles, Ralph Iaccarino, and Eslick.