

Seattle City Council

**Public Safety, Government Relations, and Arts Committee Meeting**

Tuesday, 4:00 PM, April 18, 2006

**Words' Worth**

The Poetry Program of the Seattle City Council

Curated by **Jeannette Allée**

Today's poet is **Linden Ontjes**

**Linden Ontjes** is a poet, visual artist, and teacher. She has published her poetry in Ploughshares, Prairie Schooner, Nimrod, the Seattle Review, Exquisite Corpse, and other literary journals. She has received support from the Denali Foundation, Alaska State Council on the Arts, Foundation for Art Resources, and the King County Commission for Public Art.

**Sentencing Spring**

by Linden Ontjes

Recidivist season,  
winter no apparent  
deterrent. The minute  
it's sprung, it's back  
to its old tricks: birds  
and bees, flowers, trees,  
all the collywobbles  
of romantic fevers, AM  
radio, air  
spiked with extra oxygen.  
Spring, its verb  
case sings  
within its spelling.  
We should impose  
stiff mandatory sentences  
on picnicking participles:  
those Greek and Latin  
sandwiches,  
that tablecloth  
spread on the ground.  
April, you sting

and show no remorse.  
The pathetic fallacy  
of responsive weather  
belongs to great fiction.  
In this, my fortieth  
season, you are cruel  
as a game of word  
association: hot/cold,  
jail/free, sun/rain, you/me.

-- *end* --