

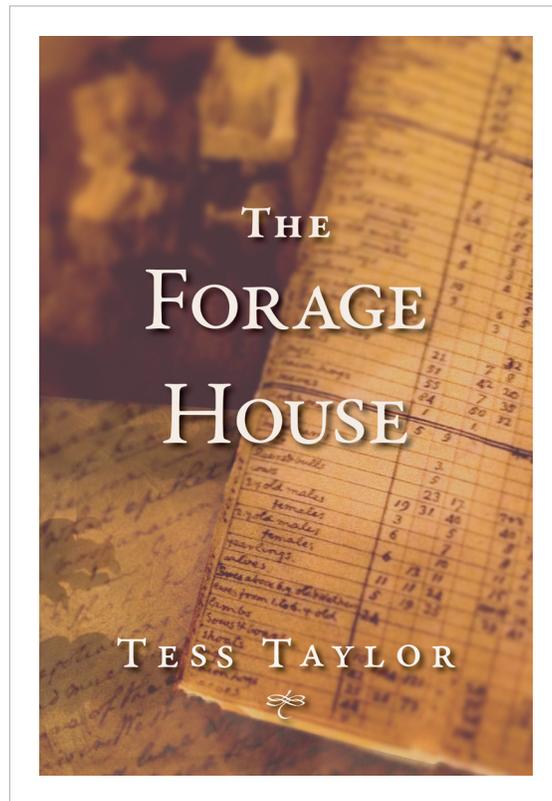
Tess Taylor

POET • CRITIC

Tess Taylor

September 2013

THE FORAGE HOUSE



ISBN: 978-1-59709-270-8

6"x 9", 88 pages

Tess Taylor's anticipated lyric debut about inheritance and loss crosses the continent in search of marked and unmarked graves. *The Forage House* explores how we make stories, and how histories—even painful ones—make us.

"The Forage House"
September 2013

Tess Taylor

in

THE FORAGE HOUSE

ATTIC BOXES FULL of shards. Family stories full of secrets. A grandchild wondering what to save and what to throw away tries to make sense of what it means to inherit anything at all. In *The Forage House*, Tess Taylor's anticipated lyric debut, the speaker unravels a rich and troubling history. Some of her ancestors were Randolph Jeffersons, one of Virginia's most prominent slaveholding families. Some were New England missionaries. Some were dirt-poor Appalachians. And one was the brilliant, controversial Thomas Jefferson. Taylor herself is a Californian, who grew up a continent away from each of these worlds. Shuttling between legend and story, history and family tale, these poems visit cluttered attics, torn wills, and marked and unmarked graves. They explore the decline of a family home, record the death of a matriarch, and visit restless ghosts. Working alongside historians and archaeologists, Taylor crafts a lyric history of shards, buttons, pipes, and the accidental unearthings of a busy state building its new freeway.

Moving between past and present, east and west, these poems record an uneasy genealogist struggling with ambiguous legacy. They ask what family stories contain, what they leave out, and how fragments exert force now. *The Forage House* is personal—rooted in lived bodies, physical experience, travel—but it is not solitary. What lies on the margins of a story or utterance? How do we access what we cannot know about the past? Questions of what to save and what to re-invent, what is said and what is left out, are also political. These poems dance between inheritance and loss, reimagining "illuminating lies." In their hunger to assemble and remember, they also forge a new record of struggle and love: "how much I wish for will not be recorded."

"The Forage House"
September 2013

Tess Taylor

press information

THE FORAGE HOUSE

IN 1997, University of Virginia biologist Eugene Foster designed a genetic test that established for the first time that the DNA of some of Sally Hemings descendants had a tag matching Thomas Jefferson's Y chromosome. For Foster, it was a clever way of answering a scientific puzzle, of using genetics to resolve a long-standing historical dispute. For Jefferson historians, it furthered existing reevaluations of a brilliant and enigmatic historic lightning rod. For Hemings descendants, the DNA confirmed long-held oral history. For Tess Taylor, the news was also personal: She is a white descendant of Thomas Jefferson. Her own family had been held together for generations by a shared internal history, one she now was forced into rethinking.

During the years following the DNA evidence, there was public outcry and family turmoil. If DNA evidence linked the Hemings family to white descendants of Jefferson, should they be allowed into the graveyard Jefferson left to his children? A painful family dispute ensued. In 2013, some of that public furor has subsided. But Taylor continued to be haunted by the abrupt and painful reminder of her own history as the descendant of slave-owners. This legacy—and the questions of presence and absence it implied—became the fodder for a searching collection of poetry.

The Forage House—which was partly written in residence at Monticello—is as much about the imperfect material of family stories as it is about the imperfect and politically charged material of history. “Omissions are deliberate and accidental. Omissions are deliberate,” Taylor writes. Working alongside the field's top historians and archaeologists, visiting family attics and rarely seen relics, Taylor has crafted a lyric history that plays at the margins of those omissions, using shards, buttons, and the accidental unearthings of a busy state building a new freeway.

Taylor, also an accomplished journalist, has also written for *The New York Times*, *The Atlantic*, *The New Yorker* and other venues. She had hoped at one point to write about her family in prose. But as she began her work she found that many sites of family memory were cloaked in evasion, silence, or absence. In *The Forage House*, Taylor uses poetry to dramatize a dance between what is and is not known, what will and will not be said. Moving between past and present, east and west, these poems reveal an uneasy genealogist struggling with ambiguous legacy. The poems ask how fragments exert force now. They dance between inheritance and loss, reimagining “illuminating lies.” In their hunger to assemble and remember, they also forge a new record of struggle and love: “how much I wish for will not be recorded.” This is a book about the legacy of slavery; the violence of not recording lives; the aftermath and echo and ghosts of that violence. It is also a book about family and memory, about love, inheritance, and loss. It explores how faulty and fragile our most intimate self-knowledge is, how jagged the materials out of which any of us craft any knowledge at all.

“*The Forage House*”
September 2013

Tess Taylor

praise for

THE FORAGE HOUSE

Tess Taylor's *The Forage House* is a brave and compelling collection that bears witness to the journey of historical discovery. Sifting through archives, artifact, and souvenir, Taylor presents a dialectic of what's recorded and what's not, unearthing the traces that give way to her own history—and a vital link to our shared American past. What's here and accounted for draws us powerfully toward what's absent; what seems complete here never is—something as fragmented as history in the language, as haunted too.

—NATASHA TRETHERWEY

Ezra Pound's definition of the epic—"A poem containing history" demands courage and intellectual range, as well as lyrical gifts. Tess Taylor meets that challenge in *The Forage House*. A figure of epic scale, Taylor's Thomas Jefferson is tragic as well: "ambitious founding father." The poise, candor and reach of this book—with a vision that embraces the enigmas of contemporary El Cerrito along with those of the slave-owner Jefferson—are deeply impressive.

—ROBERT PINSKY

Document-gatherer, exorcist, mourner, pack-rat, and celebrant—Tess Taylor orients herself within her family's history of slave-owning in Virginia, their missionary zeal in India, and their displacement to California. A mini-history of our nation, her ambitious poems ignite fact into lyric flash as she implores her ancestors "to explain / their America, their prodigal / half-remembered, always present pain." *The Forage House* is a book of conscience and sensuous reckoning.

—ROSANNA WARREN

In Tess Taylor's collection of poetry, American history is a garment woven from tattered bits of family lore and large swaths of imaginative inlays, so that which shines most is a spun strand of stunningly rich language.

—MAJOR JACKSON

Tess Taylor's *The Forage House* is, among other things, a tribute to the human capacity to perceive the objects of one's attention—one's surroundings, things at hand, and even oneself—not merely as they appear in the present, but also as products of, and with, particular histories. These histories can never be retrieved in their entirety, much less with perfect certainty, and what we discover of them might turn out to be difficult to accept. Nonetheless, the sense that we live "haunted by remains" should be cultivated and celebrated as a redeeming human trait, one that will serve not only to fortify our grasp of the present, but also our commitment to the future. Few books in recent memory have taken up that task as scrupulously and artfully as this one.

—TIMOTHY DONNELLY

"*The Forage House*"
September 2013

Eighteenth Century Remains

Site Seven, Albemarle County

The ridge a half mile down from Monticello.
A pit cut deeper than the plow line.
Archaeologists plot the dig by scanning

plantation land mapped field
for carbon, ash, traces of human dwelling.
We stand amid blown cypresses.

Inheritors of absences, we peer
into the five-by-five foot ledge.
Unearthed painstakingly, these shards:

pipe stems, seeds, three greening buttons.
Centuries-old hearthstones still charred,
as if the fire is only lately gone.

“Did they collect these buttons to adorn?” No one knows.
“Did they trade, use them for barter?”
Silence again.

Light, each delicate pipe stem,
something someone smoked at last
against a sill-log wall that did for home,

then stowed underground, where someone guarded
plates or bowls, some hard-earned willowware.
Between vines, a tenuous cocoon.

A grassy berm that was a road.
A swaying clue
faint as relief at finding traces left

of lives held here that vanish off
like blue smoke plumes I suddenly imagine—
which are not, will not, cannot be enough.

Tess Taylor

TESS TAYLOR grew up in El Cerrito, California and attended Berkeley High School. She enrolled at Amherst College, but took a leave of absence to work as a translator and chef's assistant at the Ecole Ritz Escoffier in Paris. When she came home, she majored in Urban Studies and English, interned at Chez Panisse, and ran a summer gardening program for teenagers. She eventually moved to New York to work as a journalist.

Tess's work has appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The Threepenny Review*, *The Boston Review*, *The New York Times* and *The New Yorker*. Her first collection of poems, *The Misremembered World*, was selected by Eavan Boland for the Poetry Society of America's New York chapbook fellowship. Tess has also received residencies and fellowships from MacDowell, Bread Loaf, the American Antiquarian Society, the International Center for Jefferson Studies and the Headlands Center for the Arts.

In 2011, Tess was the Amy Clampitt Resident and moved to write poetry in Amy Clampitt's former home in Lenox, Massachusetts. Now she writes book reviews for NPR's *All Things Considered*, and teaches writing at the University of California, Berkeley. She lives again in El Cerrito.





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Poetry Profiled 2013

In celebration of National Poetry Month, 'PW' talks to the authors of four of this year's most exciting poetry titles.



By Craig Morgan Teicher | Apr 19, 2013

These four poets cross (and break across) all kinds of lines, joining personal and public history and traditional and experimental styles.

Poet: Tess Taylor

Book: In her debut, *The Forage House* (Red Hen Press, Aug.), Taylor explores a complex familial and personal history that traces her ancestry back to Founding Father Thomas Jefferson.

Representative lines:

You still wanted for them to explain

their America, their prodigal
half-remembered, always present pain.

Impossible to ask. *Don't speak of race.*
The record's scratched. I don't recall. I never knew.

*Anyone who'd tell you's dead. And: No one would
tell you.*

Behind the book:

"I began to know that I would need to write a version of this book in the late '90s, when DNA tests confirmed that chromosomal patterns on the descendants of Sally Hemings matched the patterns on the chromosomes of descendants of Thomas Jefferson.

"It was a fierce wake-up call, because I am a white descendant of Thomas Jefferson. I hadn't engaged with this history as a kid or sensed how it connected to me. I had blocked out considering my own connection to slavery. I felt the enormity of my ignorance. I needed to process this in some way, to articulate the grief and haunting and re-discovery I felt. I thought about writing nonfiction, but I realized that poetry, with its reliance on what is not said as much as what is, gave form to the feeling of loss and fragmentation I was experiencing.

"Fortunately, I received a fellowship from the International Center for Jefferson Studies and worked alongside archaeologists and historians at Monticello for a summer. I was there while they were doing important work that has helped reconstruct some of the historical record about practices of slavery.

"This material feels provocative to me because it straddles the private and the public. Jefferson is fascinating for me as a poet. He's a founding father, but he's my actual ancestor. We argue and struggle with him and inherit his legacy as a nation, but I also struggle with him personally."

THE OTHER SIDE OF HISTORY

Introducing Tess Taylor

Natasha Trethewey

IN THE INTRODUCTION to his 2002 book, *Who Owns History?* historian Eric Foner asks then answers that question: “Everyone and no one—which is why the study of the past is a constantly evolving, never-ending journey of discovery.” In Tess Taylor’s poems, I find lyrical evidence of that journey, a questioning rooted in the push toward discovery that a poem can be. Her project is anchored by the public declaration of “ownership” of a history the poet would rather not have to claim: the legacy of slaveholding—its racism and erasures—of which Taylor writes, “Ancestors, I would undo this if I could.” Instead of simply *undoing*, the poems lay claim to the past—a past that belongs to people on either “side” of history to write.

These days, history and heritage are big industries—genealogies and family trees, pilgrimages to the “Old South” in the form of garden tours at antebellum mansions complete with guides in hoop skirts, Civil War battle reenactments, site tours of Colonial Williamsburg, Monticello. The list goes on. Yet, as Joel Brouwer wrote a few years ago in an essay titled “Clio Rising,” “the muse of history wields little influence over contemporary American poets.” Poets such as Phil Levine, Rita Dove, Ellen Bryant Voigt, Marilyn Nelson, Yusef Komunyakaa, W. D. Snodgrass (and several others), Brouwer declared, are the exception, not the rule.

Now, just a few years later, a new generation of young and emerging poets is responding to the muse of history in poetic styles ranging from the traditional to the experimental. For me, and—I think—for American poetry, this is exciting: more of our past resurrected in the enduring rhythms of poetry, the gaps filled in with imagery that can make the mind leap to a new apprehension of things, language giving voice to the spaces that silence has inhabited and oblivion has ruled. There are countless histories to be unearthed and told—and as Eric Foner suggests, more than one legitimate way of recounting them. This is why it is important that a young poet pose questions to the history she has been given with a blend of optimism in the possibility of language to be a talisman against forgetting and a good hum-



TESS TAYLOR
PHOTO BY DANIELLE NELSON MOURNING

bling dose of fear that she might never discover what she seeks. “How much I wish for will not have been recorded,” Taylor writes, and I am reminded of Whitman’s declaration about the Civil War: “The real war will not get into the books.” Even in his skepticism, however, he anticipated a time when fuller versions of history would be told: “Long, long hence,” he wrote, “when the grave has quenched many hot prejudices and vitalities, and an entirely new class of thinkers and writers come to the argument, the complete question can perhaps be fairly weighed.”

I champion the arrival of yet another generation of thinkers and writers of which Tess Taylor is part. In her poems, history is a fragment, knowable perhaps, but even the journey is discovery—of self, of national memory and forgetting, and of the alluring, shifting, and illusive nature of our ever-evolving history. In her act of uncovering, she forges a poetry that grapples with the intersections of public and personal history, an act that echoes Phil Levine’s words, *I write what’s given me to write*.

Tess Taylor

Poem by **TESS TAYLOR**

World's End: On the Site of Randolph Wilton

I. Plat

The place, I read, was Powhatan once, a fishing camp, the dot on John Smith's map, east of drawn savages dancing, north of where etched & tongued fires lean.

At the James, the new extension of the Pocahontas Parkway was saltmeadow, cordgrass tributary

the English christened World's End.

(Found here: A skull. Found: A human femur.)

Next, a Randolph port where dinghies freighted

cargo sundries from the Chesapeake, a hemp-tied ramp where the enslaved of Wilton shouldered cuffed tobacco harvests.

On one plat, a lacy tracery:
Barns: icehouses: ferry: wharf.
No angled squares or x's mark slave shanties:

Daubed beam dwellings crumbled without record.

II. Plantation

Taken by the Colonial Dames of America, the great home sits reconstructed

*(Historians speculate:
an informal economy of gleaned objects—)*

near the schoolhouse where Jefferson learned Latin. Its walls are hewn oak planks of New World wood.

(—traded what they grew in kitchen gardens—)

Walnut-eyed portraiture, each creamy rouche.

Storm-petrel prints, an era's china, framed and still. As if intact, each cool reconstruction.

On roads beside gates, passing windshields flash pewter like buttons in the till.

III. Bulletin

I may never know even one name of these accidentally unearthed dead.

*(Travillion's Billy
absconded wearing hobnail shoes—)*

Instead, names emerge in wills or as haphazard property, as descriptions of the hunted in police rolls

or next to notices for stolen goods purloined rings, watch-fobs, advertisements for curative elixirs.

(My negro Samuel, one crazy eye—)

Gull-billed terns *cree-cree* above the sedge.

(limps. Look for him at his mama's.)

No papers recognize this land as family site. That violent silencing endures.

I am afraid, my friend says, of looking, finding nothing, a search ending in nothing.

She says, *I hallow all the disappeared.*
I feel heavy with wild namelessness.

Ancestors, I would undo this if I could.

IV. Exit 67

I stood and watched the clouds heap up lavender. Beyond undug graves, workers

mounted beams and spurs.
Atlas-makers note the new route number.

I write:
How much I wish for will not have been recorded.

Tess Taylor

THE MISREMEMBERED WORLD TESS TAYLOR

Selected and Introduced by EAVAN BOLAND

This is a book of places that are really times and times that are actually places in disguise. A book, in other words, full of the surprising maps of human desire and regret. What's more, there is something bold and winning in the way these boundaries are dissolved. For instance, in the poem called "Song for the Last Stars" the well-worn lights of the sky become a pretext for a deft re-arrangement of place and time, all in one:

*And even without compasses
seafarers steered the seas with them,
and slaves escaped up north by them,
and magi found a king.*

But the places and times here come at a price. And this, more than anything else, drew me in as a reader. The twenty or so poems here contain an unusual mix of lyricism and skepticism. It is worth paying sharp attention to these lyric features. Often enough they drop us suddenly into a world of questioning—uncomfortable, with sharp, digging elbows. It's as if the poems suddenly remembered their right to dissent just when we've forgotten ours.

Take the poem "Family Atlas, 1863." The etching, in an atlas found in the New York Public Library, shows a landscape, some citizens, the tiredness of people, some Native Americans and the beautiful, harsh landscape behind them. In other words, a complex, poignant portrait of another time, which is also another place. And then come the lines

The picture's not the story of a progress.

It is progression: Stranger, more sinister.

It is an exploration in reverse.

It seems to ask, why is the city coming?

And, must it come? At what price, mapping?

This is just a fraction. There are also poems here of festivals, celebrations, leave-takings. Whole lines, stanzas, images and cadences pop up which are unafraid of the absurd, of the small, of the skewed angle. In "Congregational," Easter cakes become "sugary hoards/of pale blue marshmallow birds/chirruped, stuck in frosting nests." In "Departing O'Hare," the small towns of America, on a computer map, look "like sewn down buttons/on a vast, uneven mattress." An ear infection and a visit to the doctor result in a state "Like being stuck inside a seashell/it grew both intimate and lonely."

But there's a reason for every skewed angle and strange view. These wayward, assured and memorable poems are not arbitrarily making new maps. They are not about the assertion of new linguistic charts. They are about the deep, painful loss of direction in which a life is lived, felt, and can be renewed. And as such, they are a powerful register of where most of us are, most of the time.

EAVAN BOLAND

*Poetry Society of America chapbook intro
"The Misremembered World"*

Tess Taylor



NEW AMERICAN POETS

Tess Taylor

Asked to identify the origins of my desire to write poetry, I mostly come up with a sense of nostalgia, flagged by a few odd landmarks. Some of them were established when I was sixteen and lived in Berkeley, and a wiry man named Mr. Valtz was my junior year English teacher. He was 26, with wild hair and veiny arms. He dedicated Mondays to silent reading and Fridays to storytelling because, as he put it, "It was important for us to learn good oral skills." He told most of the stories.

In between, on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, we read *Henry IV*, *Dracula*, the Brontës and Ntozake Shange. Mr. Valtz taught poetry in a similarly mixed up way, by combining things he liked on photocopied sheets I still have. We read a mixture of 17th century sonnets, Theodore Roethke's "Prayer for a Young Wife" and D.H. Lawrence on little fish. We read that plum poem by William Carlos Williams, and many of its irreverent spoofs, like, "This is just to say, I have burned down the house that you were building for your retirement, and were probably hoping to live in. Forgive me, the flaming beams were so clear, and so orange."

Later there would be more disciplined beginnings. But that was the year we read Robert Hass' "Meditation at Lagunitas," and learned that Robert Hass himself was up the street and teaching at the University of California. This was my first experience picturing a real, living poet wandering through my landscape, crafting poems out of it. It was very exciting to think that such good poems might be made so nearby: I myself was very fond of Lagunitas.

It is hard to trace why things resonate. Mr. Valtz did not explain the poem for us, but just read it, pronouncing the words *blackberry* and *pumpkinseed* with great feeling, so that even now, repeating them, I feel as if I connect to much more than their names. That same year, on the terrace of a café on Hopkins Street, my friend Jasmine and I sat together, decoding those poems. Something momentous might be happening, we felt. "The word is elegy to what it signifies," we repeated. It began to rain, and the air smelled like eucalyptus. We sat just inside the line of falling rain, next to a flower stand, watching the droplets bead inside some scarlet tulips.



Tess Taylor

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EXPLANATION

by Tess Taylor

Because the snow eclipsed the woods and formed the definite wet gravel and the lumber pilings into rounded banks and slate diagonals.

Because across blank snow, dark cherry boughs cast intricate, protracted hieroglyphs, and the falling downs spun in the light.

All this new hidden-ness lay spread around us hinting, as at some forgotten word. Because, as if in offering you said

chrysanthemum. O I adored the sudden world you made with your red lips: I wanted some, and plundered it.

* * *

From *The Misremembered World*, selected by Eavan Boland for the PSA New York Chapbook Fellowship competition. All Rights Reserved.

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Education

BOSTON UNIVERSITY, BOSTON, MA – *M.F.A., Creative Writing Program, Poetry. Teaching Fellow, 2006*
Coursework in 19th-century American Literature.

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY, NEW YORK, NY – *M.A., School of Journalism. Portfolio Fellow, 2004*
Environmental journalism, urban journalism, long form non-fiction.

AMHERST COLLEGE, AMHERST, MA – *B.A., English and Urban Studies, magna cum laude, 2000*

Teaching Experience

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA BERKELEY, BERKELEY, CA – *Lecturer, College Writing Programs. 2012–present*
Summer Bridge; Literature course: Imagining California; Poetry, Summer Creative Writing Program

BARD COLLEGE AT SIMON'S ROCK, GREAT BARRINGTON, MA – *Adjunct Faculty, General Studies. Fall 2010*
Literature course: Socrates, Sophocles, Gilgamesh, Dante

HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY, SCHOOL FOR UNIVERSITY STUDIES, HEMPSTEAD, NY – *Adjunct Writing Faculty. Fall 2008*

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, CAMBRIDGE, MA – *Writing Instructor, 2006-2007*
Academic advisor for two freshman writing classes. Lectured on composition and revision strategies, exposition and craft. Mentored 50 students per semester.

BOSTON UNIVERSITY, BOSTON, MA – *Teaching Fellow, "Introduction to Creative Writing," 2005*
One on one conferences with freshmen and sophomore writers on structure, grammar, idea-building and revision.

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY, NEW YORK, NY – *Instructor, Expository Writing Program, 2003-2004*
Taught five sections of 15 students each.

Editorial Experience

PROJECT EDITOR, ANDERSON LITERARY MANAGEMENT, NY, NY. *2007-2011*
Read manuscripts and fostered fiction, non-fiction and poetry projects for a boutique literary agency whose clients include George Packer, Phillis Levin, Molly Peacock, Rosanna Warren, Janet Todd and others.

POETRY EDITORIAL STAFF, THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY, BOSTON, MA. *2005-2006*
Involved in all aspects of the editorial process, from reading and reporting on submissions and designing features to examining new work and maintaining correspondence with writers. Copy-edited and proofed poetry.

INTERN/READER, AGNI, *2005*, THE PARIS REVIEW, *2002-2003*

Tess Taylor

Publications: Poetry

THE FORAGE HOUSE, poems. Red Hen Press, August 2013.

THE MISREMEMBERED WORLD, 43-page chapbook. Published by the PSA, December 2003, Selected by Eavan Boland for the Poetry Society of America's inaugural New York Chapbook Fellowship.

- "Big Granny" – *Shenandoah*, Winter 2012
- "Song for Sonoma" – *The Boston Review*, Summer 2011
- "Museum of the Confederacy" and "Home of the Taylors" – *Literary Imagination*, Summer 2011
- "Meeting Karen White" – *Oxford American's* Best of the South issue, Summer 2011
- "Crazy Quilt" – *The Hudson Review*, Summer 2011
- "Elk at Tomales Bay" – *Poetry Magazine*, May 2011
- "Found Poem: Prisoners of War Postcard" – *The Believer*, Summer 2010
- "Reading Walden in the Air" – *Southwest Review*, Winter 2009
- "Song for El Cerrito" – *Swink* – republished in *New Californian Writing 2010*
- "Attic Boxes, 2004" and "Oral History" *Pebble Lake Review*, Fall 2009
- "Graveyard at Monticello" – *Harvard Review*, Summer 2009
- "Ohio Engagement" – *Calyx: A Journal of Art and Literature by Women*, Summer 2009
- "World's End: On the Site of Randolph Wilton" – *American Poet*, Fall, 2008
- "North of San Francisco" – *Guernica*, Summer, 2008
- "Altogether Elsewhere" – *Warwick Review*, Fall 2009, selected for the Forward Prize honorable mention, 2009
- "Landscape" – *Painted Bride Quarterly*, Summer 2007
- "Route 127, Georgetown, ME" – *Memorious*, Summer 2007
- "Sighting" – *Literary Imagination*, Summer 2006
- "Internal Geography" – *Painted Bride Quarterly*, Fall 2005
- "The Winter Visitor" and "Some Thoughts on the Bergen Street Renaissance" – *Southwest Review*, Summer 2004. Reprinted on *Versé Daily*, and *Poetry Daily*.
- "Explanation" – *Crossroads*, February 2004
- "Daylight Savings" – *Times Literary Supplement*, 2002

Publications: Non-Fiction

COLUMNIST, THE BARNES & NOBLE REVIEW. 2007-present. Author of 'STANZA', Barnes & Noble's occasional column on poets and poetry. Frequent essays on current and beloved books: Eudora Welty, Wallace Stegner, Natasha Trethewey

FREELANCE CONTRIBUTOR. *NPR*, *New York Times Magazine*, *salon.com*, *The New Yorker*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, and others. Select publications below.

- "Remembering the Randolphins" – *Virginia Quarterly Review*, Forthcoming
- "The Waste Land App" – *The Threepenny Review*, Summer 2012
- "Modernist Masterpiece Meets Modern Technology" – podcast on TS Eliot, *Poetry Off the Shelf*, poetryfoundation.org, Fall 2011
- "Imagining Byzantium" – creative non-fiction, *Southwest Review*, Winter, 2010
- "A Much-Mended Thing" – podcast on Amy Clampitt, *Poetry Off the Shelf*, poetryfoundation.org, Fall 2010
- "Stanza" – regular Poetry Column, *Barnes & Noble Review*, April 2010-ongoing
- "Body of Work" – essay on Thom Gunn, *Boston Review*, Spring 2010
- "Twice Told Tales" – essay on literary retelling, poetryfoundation.org, Spring 2009
- Reviews of books by Kathleen Jamie – *Boston Review*, July/August 2008

Tess Taylor

Publications: Non-Fiction (continued)

Reviews of books by Robert Hass – *Harvard Review*, Spring 2008

Reviews of books by Henri Cole and Micheal Longley – *Harvard Review*, Fall 2007

“Making the Best of it in Poetry” – *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 19 2006

“From the Papers of Elizabeth Bishop” – interview with Alice Quinn, *The Atlantic Online*, February 2006

“Enormous Puny Sadness” – interview with Gail Mazur, *The Atlantic Online*, February 2006

Awards And Fellowships

AMY CLAMPTT RESIDENT, *Lenox, MA, 2010-2011*

MACDOWELL COLONY FELLOW, *Peterborough, NH, 2009*

BREAD LOAF WRITER’S WORKSHOP, *Scholar, Middlebury College, VT, 2007*

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE, *Headlands Center for the Arts, Sausalito, CA, 2007 + AFFILIATE ARTIST, 2012*

WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST FELLOW, *American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, MA, 2006*

FIRST UNION FELLOW, *Robert H. Smith Center for Jefferson Studies, Charlottesville, VA, 2006*

COPELAND FELLOW, *Amherst College, Amherst, MA, 2005*

MORTON MARR POETRY PRIZE, *Southwest Review, 2004*

I. F. STONE AWARD, *Overseas Press Club, granted for international reporting, 2004*

NEW YORK CHAPBOOK FELLOW, *Poetry Society of America, NY, NY, 2003*

Select Presentations and Commissions

NEWS POET – *National Public Radio, Washington, DC. August 21, 2012*

HOST, “Flight of Poets,” – *Litquake, San Francisco, CA. Pair six California poets with six California wines. Fall 2010, 2011, 2012*

READER, *Bryant Park Summer Reading Series, New York, NY; – Read on “Lyric History,” Summer 2011*

CONVENER, “First Loves: Poets on Books that Changed Them,” *Berkshire Festival of Women Writers, Lenox, MA, Spring 2011*

PRESENTER, “Open Source Odyssey: A Look at Zachary Mason’s ‘Lost Books,’” *Annual conference of the Association of Literary Scholars Critics and Writers, Princeton, NJ, Fall 2010*

VISITING WRITER, *Monterey Peninsula College, Monterey, CA, Fall 2010*

VISITING WRITER, *Wofford College, Spartanburg, SC, Fall 2010*

GUEST LECTURER, *NYU School of Continuing Education, Fall 2009*

INSTRUCTOR, *Alternatives to Incarceration, Prison Writing Program, Summer 2009*

VISITING WRITER, *Wheaton College, Fall 2008*

READER, *Blacksmith House Reading Series, emerging writers night, March 2008*

LIBRETTIST, “Prodigal Songs: Seven Songs for a Trio of Voices” – *lyrics commissioned by the Museum of Biblical Art, music by Robinson McLellan; debut November 3, 2007*

READER, *Poetry Society of America’s Festival of New American Poets, Wednesday April 9, 2004*

Languages

FRENCH – *Lived and worked as translator in Paris. Excellent speaking and reading knowledge.*

LATIN – *Reading and translation, Ovid, Cicero.*