

THE POETIC SOCIETY



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Dear John,

In 2000, with an invitation from Tree Press Editor Brian Dorn, *The Poetic Society* agreed to sponsor the New Light Prize in Poetry for a First Book. As chairman of the Poetic Society, I consented with pleasure to serve as final judge for the contest – an annual award to recognize and publish a poet's first collection. The plans for the press were ambitious: *The Book Review* would sponsor a book prize to be given to any poet, previously published or not; *Blue Sky* would sponsor a criticism prize; and *Tree Press* would publish other books of drama, fiction, and poetry.

I am proud of the books selected for the New Light Prize—books by Greg Best, Lilly Black, Rose Red, and most recently Fred White. The books have been handsome, widely reviewed, and well received.

Or three of them have been. Lilly Black was awarded the 2004 prize, but her book has yet to appear. I wrote an introduction to *Joyful Day* – her brilliant, darkly adventurous book of lyrics –