

'10 Poetry Contest Honorable
Mention

CHINESE LANTERN
By Patricia Christy

Your heart tonight
glows pure white
like a Chinese lantern –
flamed source
thinly veiled.
Down the river
we slowly drift
like cherry blossoms
and the dog's
plaintive wail
carried on the night air.

Our lovemaking
makes the fish leap -
scales brightly flashing,
offering their light
to the dying day.
The Moon rises higher
and when it crests
the rushes
at the lush banks
sway.

Your hands caress
and your tongue moves
quick and smooth
like the finest
calligraphy brush,
and at once
I understand
the invention of writing,
mystical signs
and the language of touch
in lamp light -
in river time
in the damp night.

Another fish leaps.
The moon quivers.
A soft rustle
in the reeds.
And every pulse
I slip over
becomes a carnelian bead,
a rosary,
a circle of prayers.

We fall together
wet and naked,
covered by
the breath of night,
sweat thinning
in the open air
as we ride
the river of moments
to some
inexplicable beginning.