

# Poetry IN THE PLAZA

VILLAGE OF GREAT NECK PLAZA  
9TH ANNUAL POETRY CONTEST, April 2019

FIRST Prize

**From the Neue Galerie through Central Park**

BY George H. Northrup

I inspected harbor prostitutes  
and legless veterans in Weimar cabarets—  
their suppurating blisters in merciless light.  
Even these hideous portraits by Otto Dix  
tutor the eye to see more vividly  
the wilting red azaleas  
in all their limp surrender.

His drug-dazed heroines, cruelly observed,  
make more astonishing  
the rise of rhododendron's lacy globes.  
Are people truly that ugly and misshapen?  
Are some trees more beautiful than others?

"I had to get it out of me," he often said,  
as if describing pus or constipation.  
There, the marble staircase  
and paneled chambers  
guide perception, magnify the artistry.

Here, on a park bench, where a sudden gust  
retrieves me from extended reverie,  
afterimages of green—green everywhere—  
soothe wounded eyes still wincing  
from his gruesome study, all in red,  
of young Anita Berber  
on the fast track to death.