

# Cardiography

Category: Poems

written by Norma Smith | December 23, 2011

## **Norma Smith**

How the electrical impulse  
begins in the small part  
of the heart and provokes  
the pumping  
of the necessary

fluid, which will carry everything  
we need  
to live, everything  
we can't do without  
those impulses  
carried forward,

Carried down,  
around this body's desire  
to live and move/about  
a spark  
in a small place.

## **About the poet:**

Norma Smith has lived and worked in Oakland, California, for the better part of forty years. She has worked in hospitals her entire adult life, including a few years as an EKG monitor technician in an intensive care unit.

## **About the poem:**

"This poem was written during the period leading up to my mother's death from heart failure. I love how the body and its physiology lend themselves to metaphor, and how a line of poetry can illuminate that and help us see the whole person, the whole life, even as we're focused on the body's functioning in the moment."

## **Poetry editors:**

Judy Schaefer and Johanna Shapiro