

Echocardiography

Category: Poems

written by Rachel Hadas | July 18, 2008

Rachel Hadas

One: secretarial computer screen:
appointments, cancellations. Two: machine

we're here for, registering your heart's each pump
with grainy images that throb and jump

in sync with the obscure interior.
Three: anticlimactic VCR

screen, a tiny, garish old cartoon
squawking and jerking in the darkened room.

Past these respective renderings of vision
we move next door. Here the examination

is palpable, is stethoscope to chest:
breath in, out, raise your arms, stand, squat, and rest.

I'm sitting, staring vaguely at the sky—
from the ninth floor, a pale blue vacancy.

What is a window but another frame
or screen through which to ponder—is it time

or space that peels this dull facade to show
the poverty of what we really know

despite the wealth of data we can see
via machines that pierce opacity?

Well, no more screens for one more year or two
Thank you and goodbye. It's time to go.

About the poet:

Rachel Hadas is board of governors professor of English, Newark campus, Rutgers University. The latest of her many books of poems is *The River of Forgetfulness* (David Robert, 2006); *Classics* (WordTech Communications), a volume of selected prose, was published in 2007. Her website is www.rachelhadas.com.