

Barbara Guest

Poet Description:

Born in Wilmington, North Carolina and raised in California, Guest earned a B.A. in Humanities in 1943 at UC Berkeley. She spent years in New York City where she became involved with the New York School poets, including Frank O'Hara and John Ashbery. She was also well known for her book on the poet H.D., *Herself Defined: The Poet H.D. and Her World* (1984). Like the others in the New York School, Guest took issue with the closed-form New Critical aesthetics then dominating the academy. Her poetry was also influenced by the abstract expressionist and action painters of the 1950s and 1960s, as well as by surrealist poetry. Guest herself describes what it was like to come to maturity under the influence of surrealism: "In that creative atmosphere of magical rites, there was no recognized separation between the arts One could never again look at poetry as a locked kingdom. Poetry extended vertically, as well as horizontally. Never was it motionless within a linear structure." *Jacket* magazine adds: "Guest describes herself here as learning from the Surrealists how to make a poem move in ways other than by linear narrative: by introducing a more mobile, associative element into the poem, a sense of the 'magical' (or unrealistic) originating force from which the poem derived, and a blurring of boundaries among the poetic, musical, and visual (even plastic) arts." See *The Collected Poems of Barbara Guest* (2008).

Race/Ethnicity:

Western European ^[1]

Picture:



Gender:

Female ^[2]

Sexuality:

Straight ^[3]

First Name:

Barbara

Last Name:

Guest

Birth & Death Dates:

Monday, September 6, 1920 to Wednesday, February 15, 2006

School of Poetry:

[New York School](#) [4]

Birth Place:

Wilmington , North Carolina

United States

See map: [Google Maps](#) [5]

North Carolina US

Death Place:

Berkeley , California

United States

See map: [Google Maps](#) [6]

California US

Group visibility:

Private - accessible only to group members

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[5] <http://maps.google.com?q=34.225726+-77.944710+%28%2C+Wilmington%2C+NC%2C+%2C+us%29>

[6] <http://maps.google.com?q=37.871593+-122.272747+%28%2C+Berkeley%2C+CA%2C+%2C+us%29>