

[Katharine Harer: Two Poems](#) [1]

March 26, 2014 [Honoring Rukeyser](#) [2]

the next war

twirling for the memory of scraps
gulls scratch marks on the air

a swimmer's arms rise and fall
leaving a small wake

seals bark questions
between wooden pilings

cars and trucks, oil-driven toys we love,
murmur in the dark rooms of their engines
for more



How to Hope

I'm reading a book on hope
which sounds like I've taken up tatting
old fashioned and harmless

hope is unpopular
even Buddhists diss it telling us to live
in one awful moment at a time
and these days almost everyone wants to be a Buddhist

hope is hard to grasp when your imagination's
grown fat on darkness
like the thick underside of a mushroom

tragedy is grand scale
predictably beautiful in its way

Katharine Harer: Two Poems

Published on Talking Writing (<https://www.talkingwriting.com>)

hope is hokey
imperfect full of stumbling little acts

the way a strand of neighbors standing in the rain
on the shoulder of Highway One American flags
in their hands and homemade signs:
Peace is Patriotic
can make another strand start up
even in the imagination

standing on a curve of the coast highway
where the land seems to fall away
into the open mouth of the ocean
their bodies like flags
waving sloppily
steadfast in the downpour

with thanks to Rebecca Solnit for her book, Hope in the Dark

Art Information

- "[Harbor Seals](#) [3]" © Mike Baird; Creative Commons license.



Katharine Harer's poems have been published in literary journals, in newspapers, and on poetry websites. She has written five books of poetry, all published by small presses. Katharine worked as a poet-teacher and as statewide coordinator of the California Poets In the Schools Program, and she served as the director of Small Press Traffic Literary Arts Center in San Francisco. For almost a decade, she co-coordinated the popular Poetry & Pizza series in downtown San Francisco.

For the last 36 years, she has taught English and creative writing at Skyline College in San Bruno, California. Katharine loves to perform her work, especially when accompanied by jazz musicians.

Source URL: <https://www.talkingwriting.com/katharine-harer-two-poems>

Links:

[1] <https://www.talkingwriting.com/katharine-harer-two-poems>

[2] <https://www.talkingwriting.com/talkingwriting-categories/spotlight-honoring-rukeyser>

[3] <http://www.flickr.com/photos/mikebaird/438044741/>

