

Virus Vigil

Poetry by Jim Blackburn
Art by Isabelle Scurry Chapman



The Bayou

Buffalo Bayou runs brown and slow,
It's a neighbor to many who do not know
The wonder and magic to be found within
This neighborhood jewel, so let me begin.

There's a perfect bird print on the mud bar,
There's a splash of water from the rolling gar,
The great egret rises from the water's edge,
The green on the shore is a lovely sedge.

The ripples form around the fallen branch
As I in my kayak take a chance
Of scooting over the underwater hazard,
My trusty paddle joining its water scabbard.

The pileated woodpecker flies across the sky,
And I catch the raccoon from the corner of my eye,
A large fish flashes in the shallows,
I can envision the natives fishing with arrows.

This wonderful bayou – this jewel – this gem
Is the center of Houston – the bayou within,
Developed land surrounds its length,
Yet it has survived with amazing strength.

This is Houston's temple where I come to worship,
Protected by individual acts of stewardship,
Eventually the bayou became part of our psyche,
Although one would say it wasn't likely.

In Houston it's amazing to find such a reserve,
Particularly when you sit back and objectively observe
How we treat it so badly - how we don't celebrate it,
But It absorbs the blows - it can take a hit.

So I walk down the verdant banks of the bayou,
And sit in the shade and say a heartfelt thank you,
For being there when I feel down and out,
To me, this is what Earth Church is all about.

So welcome to Earth Church,
Pull yourself up pew,
And watch the water flow
On Buffalo Bayou.