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## Ponca City, Oklahoma: 1984

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# Ponca City, Oklahoma: 1984

By Nuala Archer

*Good as old-timey barn-raising, corn-shuckings and apple-squeezings are community cannings. Come blackberry season Denny and Ken, Chris and Karla, Myrtle and Marybeth spill out of their VW RABBITS onto ripening brambles — with buckets, hats, gloves, bug repellent, and bubble gum. When bees hum uncomfortably close, the group breaks off and heads (past the Drive-In where "Bo Lero" is playing) for pot-luck and a swim. Then the serious jelling begins. Dark berries are boiled in assorted pans. Jelly-jar washers, dryers, ladlers, and sealers are kept busy. Ken quotes THE TULSA TRIBUNE: "Eskimos in Nicaragua are curious about how Poloroids will work in Primary Reading and Poetry Programs." As the sun sets, jelly jars fill, and talk turns to Bo Derek and chandeliers.*

DR. NUALA ARCHER, born of Irish parents in Rochester, New York, has lived in Central America, Milwaukee, and Dublin. In 1980, she won the Irish Patrick Kavanagh Poetry Award for a manuscript that was published as *WHALE ON THE LINE*. Dr. Archer is an Assistant Professor at OSU, where she edits *MIDLAND REVIEW* and is poetry Co-Editor of *CIMARRON REVIEW*.



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