

## Introduction

THE EDITORS are delighted to announce that the winner of this year's Anne Halley Poetry Prize is Brian Swann, for his poem "Birds in the Woods," published in the Winter 2005 issue. By a happy coincidence (I'm not a contest judge), a lifetime ago Brian and I sat across from each other during four- and five-hour graduate seminars conducted by Edward Dudley Hume Johnson, an eminent Victorianist of his day. A vast expanse of polished table-wood strewn with leather-bound books and smoking materials stretched out between us—great thoughts transpired between the striking of a match and its application to the tobacco. Like all memories of comparable antiquity, it seems fixed in a kind of amber, yet Brian, Professor of English at the Cooper Union, escaped it to publish voluminously in many genres: fiction, poetry, criticism, translations, and children's literature. His newest books of poems are *Autumn Road*, published last year by Ohio State University Press, and *Snow House*, which won the 2005–06 Lena-Miles Wever Todd Poetry Prize. "Birds in the Woods" can be found on the *MR* website (<http://www.massreview.org/>).

The prize celebrates the memory of Anne Halley, poet and *MR* editor. It is awarded annually to the author of the best poem to appear in each volume of this magazine. This year's judges were *MR* poetry editors Ellen Watson and Deborah Gorlin, and James Haug, author of three volumes of poetry, and winner of the Morse Poetry Prize.

*David Lenson*  
for the editors