



For Immediate Release

**NEW POETRY CHAPBOOK REEXAMINES THE WORK  
OF ONE OF AMERICA'S MOST FAMOUS ARTISTS**



In *Nostalgia's Thread* (October 2009), poet Randall R. Freisinger presents accessible and perceptive meditations on ten of Norman Rockwell's most familiar images in order to shed new light on his art and to demonstrate the complex and dynamic relationship between a work of art and its beholder. And as beholders are inevitably shaped by their historical and cultural context, this book of poems also provides a revealing portrait of central tensions in contemporary America.

For many, Norman Rockwell is our country's most instantly recognized artist. A generation grew up surrounded by his paintings that came weekly to homes on covers of *The Saturday Evening Post*. The mostly narrative poems of *Nostalgia's Thread*, however, descend beneath the deceptively tranquil and nostalgic surfaces of ten canonical Rockwell paintings as well as deep into the minds and memories of characters who are depicted in the paintings or who, in various ways, are drawn into them. In either case, these characters inevitably discover the sleight of hand on which any simplistic notion of nostalgia depends.

Before *Nostalgia's Thread*, few if any poets have found worthy subject matter in Norman Rockwell's paintings. Freisinger has worked against the grain of such poetic preconceptions and demonstrated in this lively and engaging book that genuine art, whether visual or written, has no limits.

The publication of *Nostalgia's Thread* comes at a propitious moment in Rockwell's evolving reputation. A serious critical reassessment of Rockwell's oeuvre has been underway since 1999, when a major retrospective exhibit entitled *Norman Rockwell: Pictures for the American People* opened at The High Museum of Art in Atlanta and during the next two years then traveled to six other major museums across the country.

Currently, The Norman Rockwell Museum in Massachusetts is celebrating its fortieth anniversary, and major exhibitions of the artist's work are set to open at the Museum of Art, Fort Lauderdale, and the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington DC. Randall Freisinger's evocative poems add depth and nuance to this long-overdue reappraisal of this most iconic American artist.

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**About the Author:** *Nostalgia's Thread* is Randall R. Freisinger's third chapbook-length collection of poetry. His two previous chapbooks are *Hand Shadows* (Green Tower Press, 1988) and *Running Patterns*, which won the Flume Press Chapbook Award in 1985. His full-length book, *Plato's Breath*, won the May Swenson Poetry Award from Utah State University Press in 1996. His poems have appeared for over forty years in numerous literary magazines and anthologies and have been nominated four times for a Pushcart Prize. He is Professor Emeritus of Rhetoric, Literature, and Creative Writing at Michigan Technological University and lives with his wife, Jill Burkland, on the Keweenaw Peninsula of Upper Michigan.

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***Nostalgia's Thread: Ten Poems on Norman Rockwell Paintings***

Randall R. Freisinger

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