



Celebrating Christmas, oil on panel, 8" x 10", by Marieluise Hutchinson

Published courtesy of [Tree's Place](#), in Orleans
Marieluise Hutchinson's work can also be found at [J. Todd Galleries](#) in Wellesley

Christmas Blessings

by Kim Baker

After Celebrating Christmas, by Marieluise Hutchinson

Winter mist presses the blue-black of its whale backs
down onto the lightning bolt of smoke
rising from a fireplace into accumulating snow clouds.
Even three chimneys seem insufficient
to give the cold shoulder to these Nimbostratus,
like Ahab's nemesis
that seems ready to swallow home and hearth.

White tundra underlines the holiday homestead,
unblemished except for the path he took
bringing in the tree from the nearby countryside.
The scarecrow maples spread wide twig-fingers
through which the barn-red farmhouse plays hide and seek.

Unseen sun setting west throws saltbox shadows
across two roofs but cannot darken
the hearth-glow of this Christmas kitchen
smiling like pumpkin pie through mullioned glass.

Multicolored bulbs necklace the house and fir
bursting in yuletide mirth.
It might be nineteen hundreds' New Hampshire
or Massachusetts in the second millennium,

but the artist knows there is no need to specify.

New England farmhouses and nostalgia are timeless.

A wreath almost as big as the doors
hangs on the barn as it snores softly in ecru expectancy.
Horses and cows never went much
for plum pudding and turkey and mulled wine.
So they sleep and keep watch over the waiting manger
for three strangers needing a place to stay the night.

Out beyond the muted pines, the fox and coyote pause long enough
to hear the five o'clock church bells peal across the fields,
harmonize with the inside giggles of a family unwrapping presents
and celebrating its many blessings.



When she isn't teaching the abundant virtues of the comma, writing about big hair and Elvis, and doing the Cha Cha, Kim Baker works to end violence against women. Kim performs in the annual *Until the Violence Stops Festival Providence*.

Her poems have been published online and in print. Her most recent reasons to cha cha cha include fourth place in the Poetry Society of New Hampshire National Poetry Contest, *This I Believe* essays broadcast on NPR of Rhode Island, and first play stage-reading at the Culture*Park Play Marathon in New Bedford, Massachusetts about a middle-aged female survivor of childhood sexual assault. Kim is currently writing a book of ekphrastic poems about Cape Cod art. She lives in Warwick and shares her musings at <http://thinkingoutsidethesign.blogspot.com/>

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