

Diane Di Primo

Diana di Primo was born in 1934 in Brooklyn, New York. As a young adult, she attended Swarthmore College but dropped out after two years. Instead of schooling, she started to experiment with poetry. Specifically, though, she focused on the beat poetry movement. In 1958, she published her first book of poems. Titled, "this kind of bird flies backwards", this book did not get the same recognition even today of her later books. She has published over 3 dozen poetry books.

Diane's poetry took on a strong rebellion from that of other poets. Similarly to other beat poets, her motives were to do whatever she wanted. Many of her poems focused on themes such as feminism, sexuality, class, and the female experience. Her poems had a wide range of emotions and themes. After publishing her book "The Floating Bear" in 1961, she was arrested by the FBI. In this book, two of the poems were deemed "obscene" to the extent of being a criminal offense. Di Prima worked outside of the box, and didn't let societal pressures define her.

Di Primo is one of very few female beat poets. This gave her poetry a unique perspective as many of her poems focused on her experiences as a woman. According to friends of Di Primo, she has a loss been driven to do everything she can in life. This is apparent through many of her poems, with their wide range of stories and perspectives.

Her style of poetry is fairly consistent throughout her work. Short lines and stanzas are common in her writing. Di Primo used a lot of metaphors and imagery in her poems. She used her perspective of the world in her work. This is especially apparent in one of her poems, titled "The Window". In this poem, D, Primo uses many metaphors to describe the world from her eyes.

*this kind of bird flies backward
and this love
breaks on a windowpane*

November 28th, 2019

Maggie Whitmore

where no light talks

-excerpt from The Window by Diane Di Primo

In this stanza, Di Primo uses the metaphors of birds and windows to describe love. This love is seen to be for both romantic love, but also her love for poetry. The outside world's perspective and judgments can be seen through the last two lines of the stanza. She doesn't let anyone control her, just like a windowpane blocking out the light.