

Shirlette Ammons' most recent collection of poetry, *Matching Skin* featuring the *John Anonymous* EP was published by Carolina Wren Press in 2008. Her first collection, entitled *Stumphole: Aunthology of Backwoods Blood*, was published by Big Drum Press in 2002. Her work has appeared in *The Ringing Ear: Black Poets Lean South*, *What Your Momma Never Told You: True Stories About Love and Sex*, and *Asheville Poetry Review* and others. She is also vocalist for the hip hop rock band Mosadi Music whose debut album, *The Window*, was released in 2006. Shirlette resides in Durham, North Carolina.

Mulatto Girl Buys the Bar a Round

Her waning sobriety,
widens into porcelain teeth
racing between black
slang and white company;
this daring internal battle leaves
her baby hair glued to her temple
beaded with sweat

Barflies extend like thumbs
to hitchhike her cackle
slovenness trickles their chins
like melting ice cubes;
two dollar drink specials
part her lips

Resident Huxtable Daughter
raps her bracelet against the bar
in time to Lenny's "Black Girl";
as interest shifts from her babble
down to her brook, stares
moist as napkins daub
her thirstiest orifice

As she extends to pay her tab
and demo the stanky leg,
the bar gawks and gulps,
beseeches her to holster it
for one more round
The evening ends like a sitcom
with audience on repeat of a thirty-minute
American episode; her barely black
display exits upstage, the backdrop
of blue-balled applause echoes
unresolved