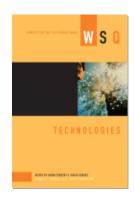


## I Have Always Wanted an Emu

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## I HAVE ALWAYS WANTED AN EMU

## SHARON MESMER

It takes guts to goose Johnny Carson with an emu.
That's why I've always wanted an emu.

My emu will have more plastic surgery than Cher, Demi Moore and the entire waitstaffs of all the Hooters, combined.

I just discovered the whole emu scene 12 days ago.

Now I want to purchase an elegant Elizabethan mansion and live there with my emu.

Their sound is incredibly deep like European dudes.

The main reason I love emus is that people suck.
It is impossible for emus to suck.
They don't have lips.

I also love emus because no one in my family can fly but we all run really fast.
We have three toes on each foot.
I'm very curious too.
I stick my nose into everything and if I don't understand something I stomp on it.

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I love Triscuits too. I believe them to be the best crackers ever in the whole history of crackers. I also love the new and improved Stardust Ballroom. I have received double in payback blessings for every rotten thing that happened to me and my emu the last time we went ballroom dancing theresomeone removed my pants and slathered me with orange marmalade. The police were NOT amused.

Here is the first poem I ever wrote about emus:

I love emus whose color is black My father took my Legos and won't give them back . . .

Don't tell anyone
but I also love
sexy emu amputees.
I heard emus are prudes
but I also heard
Posh Spice sleeps alone.
It's insane how she resembles
a raptor.
I love my emu
with all my heart.

She's my sexy shiny bitch and no one can break our bond.

If you're coulrophobic (fear of clowns) don't be afraid.
You can't love a clown or an emu if you don't love yourself first.

In 2003 Gary Sullivan invited me to join a poetry Listserv: a handful of poets were entering outrageous or inappropriate word combinations into the Google search engine and making poems out of the results, then e-mailing them around to each other. Lines from the e-mailed poems could then be reworked in equally outrageous or inappropriate ways and sent around again for further recombining. Gary said the poems were called "flarf." . . . The poems seemed to have been written by a meta-mind: in my poems I could see traces of my friends' poems, and in theirs I could see my own. With constant incorporation of bits of the posted poems into new poems, the content of each subsequent poem reflected the collective sensibility, while still containing the indelible stamp of its lowly origin (from the postscript to Annoying Diabetic Bitch).

SHARON MESMER is a Fulbright Senior Specialist candidate and recipient of two New York Foundation for the Arts poetry fellowships. Two poetry collections, *The Virgin Formica* (Hanging Loose) and *Annoying Diabetic Bitch* (Combo Books), came out this year. *Chiar Asa* (Just this) is forthcoming from Curtea Veche, Bucharest, in Romanian. Fiction collections are *The Empty Quarter* (Hanging Loose, 2000), *In Ordinary Time* (Hanging Loose, 2005), and *Ma vie à Yonago* (in French; Hachette, 2005).