**John Keats** (1795­–1821)

**To Autumn**

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,

   Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;

Conspiring with him how to load and bless

   With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;

To bend with apples the moss’d cottage-trees,

   And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;

      To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells

   With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,

And still more, later flowers for the bees,

Until they think warm days will never cease,

      For summer has o’er-brimm’d their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?

   Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find

Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,

   Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;

Or on a half-reap’d furrow sound asleep,

   Drows’d with the fume of poppies, while thy hook

      Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers:

And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep

   Steady thy laden head across a brook;

   Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,

      Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.

Where are the songs of spring? Ay, Where are they?

   Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—

While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,

   And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;

Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn

   Among the river sallows, borne aloft

      Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;

And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;

   Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft

   The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;

      And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

**Gerard Manley Hopkins** (1844–1899)

**The Windhover**

*To Christ our Lord*

I caught this morning morning’s minion, king-

    dom of daylight’s dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon, in his riding

    Of the rolling level underneath him steady air, and striding

High there, how he rung upon the rein of a wimpling wing

In his ecstasy! then off, off forth on swing,

    As a skate’s heel sweeps smooth on a bow-bend: the hurl and gliding

    Rebuffed the big wind. My heart in hiding

Stirred for a bird, – the achieve of, the mastery of the thing!

Brute beauty and valour and act, oh, air, pride, plume, here

    Buckle! AND the fire that breaks from thee then, a billion

Times told lovelier, more dangerous, O my chevalier!

   No wonder of it: shéer plód makes plough down sillion

Shine, and blue-bleak embers, ah my dear,

    Fall, gall themselves, and gash gold-vermilion.

**Paul Muldoon** (\*1951)

**The Coney**

Although I have never learned to mow
I suddenly found myself half-way through
last year’s pea-sticks
and cauliflower stalks
in our half-acre of garden.
My father had always left the whetstone
safely wrapped
in his old, tweed cap
and balanced on one particular plank
beside the septic tank.

This past winter he had been too ill
to work. The scythe would dull
so much more quickly in my hands
than his, and was so often honed,
that while the blade
grew less and less a blade
the whetstone had entirely disappeared
and a lop-eared
coney was now curled inside the cap.
He whistled to me through the gap

in his front teeth;
‘I was wondering, chief,
if you happen to know the name
of the cauliflowers in your cold-frame
that you still hope to dibble
in this unenviable
bit of ground?’
‘They would be All the Year Round.’
‘I guessed as much’; with that he swaggered
along the diving-board

and jumped. The moment he hit the water
he lost his tattered
bathing-togs
to the swimming pool’s pack of dogs.
‘Come in’; this flayed
coney would parade
and pirouette like honey on a spoon:
‘Come on in; Paddy Muldoon.’
And although I have never learned to swim
I would willingly have followed him.