

# MARTHA MORSETH

## Reclaiming the Space

I've decided to reclaim the footpath,  
not all of it,  
just a narrow strip of concrete  
I fleetingly occupy occasionally.  
I will stand my ground by walking staunch,  
refusing to give way to broadshouldered young men  
marching towards me in collision course.  
I'll no longer step into the gutter  
when morphing teenage ectoplasm materialises or  
single-minded, Cyclops businessmen  
power down on me.  
Under my arm I'll carry an umbrella  
with a long metal tip.  
I'll point it like a trident and say,  
    'Oh, I am sorry'  
when I skewer a miscreant who doesn't stay left,  
someone who doesn't obey the rules,  
someone who is reluctant  
to give an old lady some room.

Dunedin writer **Martha Morseth** has published widely in New Zealand magazines and literary journals and has published a collection of poetry: *Staying Inside the Lines* (Titahi Bay: Inkweed, 2002).