

**Written Poems - Age 12-15 Category
First Place**

**The Ballad of Blind Reverend Gary Davis
by Pablo Finnamore
Age 15 – Durham School of the Arts**

A blind Baptist moved to Durham, North Carolina
a guide and a six string at his side
sitting behind Calvin Coolidge who said nothing to him
on the B-train through Greensboro where
he saw the light of the lord through defective corneas and
sang of its glory in ragtime
he, the son of another assassination
of an American who'd fallen in the gutters of Birmingham
at the hands of a high sheriff
he, the only living son of a woman who bore eight
found himself picking patterns under the low brick castles
engulfing the tobacco district
12 bars beside Blind Boy Fuller and Bull City Red
comrades of the Piedmont Blues
until each gospel had been sung
and the common passersby had each passed by
at which Blind Reverend Gary Davis moved to New York City
a guide and a six string at his side
sitting behind Harry Truman who opened his mouth but said nothing to him
on the B-train through Greensboro
and it was in New York where he first
sensed an ounce of affection from the paler kind
an ounce of influence taken
in the seats where Dave Van Ronk
Bob Dylan and Jackson Browne sat
crooning with his picking patterns in their hands