RENEE NORMAN

Pandora's Boxes

you seem fixed on marriage
kids & writing
comments a young man
in the margin of my essay

what else is there?
i automatically think

why don't you try writing
about Australian kick boxing
he jokes
& i (fixed)
free-associate to the boxes in my basement
pushed against the cold concrete
full of flokati rugs  guitar chords
a laminated poster from San Francisco:
a willowy woman holds a broom as if it were a man
the caption reads FUCK HOUSEWORK

how easy it is to pin women
like old posters on household walls
life's graffiti scrawled upon
the lines that deepen with every laugh
every kick at those boxes

as if they do not hold
all we once were & have become
as if the lids are not worth opening

no curiosity about our contents
who will know
Pandora lies naked
preserved in plastic
hidden in the folds of plush white rugs
plucking F strings
that strain male melodies

Renee Norman, Ph.D., is a poet, writer and teacher living in Coquitlam, B.C. Her book, House of Mirrors, was published in 2001.