

Seeing the Sourlands

Trees in Winter

By Jim Amon

When you go into a forest in winter you have to ask yourself what is the forest going to present to you today? Sometimes it is the details. You might get pleasure from seeing fungi on a fallen tree trunk or a pattern of lichen and mosses on a boulder. When I went into the forest on a blustery day recently I became highly conscious of the patterns that the bare tree limbs made against the overcast sky. They seemed to be dancing. There wasn't any music—although, of course there was the sound of distant traffic and the occasional passing airplane—so I had to supply the music myself. I recently heard Appalachian Spring, the ballet music that Aaron Copland composed for the Martha Graham dance company in the 1940's, and that seemed perfect. You might want a Gershwin tune or Snoop Dog; it's your head and it's your game so you get to pick whatever music you want.

Here are my dancing trees:







Once I started seeing the dancing trees I didn't notice that it was a cold winter afternoon. "... 'tis a gift to be simple ... "