

Poetry Porch: Poetry

For Michael Longley

By Michael Todd Steffen

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The pintail
clacked its beak down at me, *Do you follow me? Seriously?*

A badger I asked to appear at our series
frankly—*You just want me there to get attention
and more people to your reading.*

When I shook hands with you and told you, *I'm Michael—
Michael?* you told me, *I've heard of you.*

Last night in my dream you told me, *You write and write
for the world of the poem.
What about the poem of the world?—*

Tugging now at my hearing with your mortal distance.
With that nearness.