

black beetle

like hilary with burning lungs
dilating his spiracles the small
black beetle astride my knuckle
gazing seaward like odysseus
through his faceted eyes at the lake
pauses there an infinite time until
my hand grows tired i wish him down
tumbles to my brief touch
a slick grass and off
among his mountains of sand
like owens laughing as he ran
all his black knees bent backwards

and i sat thinking like a bug

then i arose went walking swimming running
across the fingers joints hair
of the hands of the great animal
i call the earth

does he (like me) now write this poem?
is the sky his paper are the stars his letters?

-- Norman H. Russell

Edmond, Oklahoma

Modern Story

I kissed gold wheels
that pierced her ears
I kissed her neck

where flesh is mint leaf
then I kissed her breasts
served by her hands

and her navel, I kissed it
I kissed her thighs, kissed a marsh bud
on her panties

when a Jehova's Witness
battered in my room, with the truth
about the ouija board

-- Steve Osterlund

Sarnia, Ont., Canada