

Oratory Sunset

Crime-Bill Clinton  
Didn't Inhale,  
Hillary's Health-Care  
Couldn't Prevail.

No Matter the Lingo,  
How Hard the Sell,  
Whitewater's Rapids  
Ruined the Spell.

The Wipeout in Waco,  
A Firey Blast,  
Are America's Freedoms  
A Richman's Repast?

Bombs in the Heartland?  
Babies in Hell?  
Military Services:  
'Don't Ask, Don't Tell'?

Who is in Charge Here:  
Whatever's in Sight?  
Is Sweet Paula's Poontang  
Willie's Delight?

Can a Reptile's Contract,  
Newt's New-Rage Plan,  
Deliver a Future,  
Free Up The Land?

As Affirmative Action  
Fades in the Night,  
The Poor Cry in Darkness  
For Food and For Light!

a.k.a. Michael Newell

'95'

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Time and Space

This lighthouse beam  
Of consciousness  
Shines upon my night,  
And all I see is  
Less than whole,  
A slice of what is  
Out of sight.

Part of this picture  
That I seek,  
Is now all this I see;  
The secret to  
A total source  
Still lost in part  
To me.

Towards this nucleus  
I thrust,  
False turns lie trammelled  
'Neath my feet.  
The Grail, in time  
Seems out of reach,  
In space beyond  
The lighted beach.

But try I must,  
And try I will,  
What is this ' I '  
To be?  
A coxcomb, or  
A victim-stance  
For all the world to see?

Nay.....What matters is  
My journey home,  
Therein to find for what I reach  
And thus to know its me!

REP '94'

\* For Maud Ellmann

Shakuhachi

Kyoto maples abound  
 —Red-Orange, Autumn-Gold—  
 Above arched rooftiles  
 On a garden wall.

Beneath gnarled dwarf pines  
 A bamboo dipper rests  
 In a stone basin  
 Among remnant Kurume Azeleas.

Balance, Harmony, Purity  
 Displayed in a landscape  
 Suggesting perfection  
 Under a timeless cirrocumulus sky.

Serpentinely protruding downward  
 Out from under a Komuso Priest's  
 Inverted-bowl-shaped straw hat,  
 A curved, thick-jointed, Shakuhachi flute  
 —Its bell of whorled-bamboo root-ends  
 Birthmarked with raw-purple splotches—  
 Is held formally by the player's two delicate hands.

His spirit, flesh, kimono, and outer-robe  
 Wrapped in one solitary sentient being  
 —Draped in huge elongated sleeves—  
 Kneeling seiza on tatami mats  
 Placed across weathered temple planks  
 And inter-locking joists at perpendicular posts  
 Immaculately fitted to oblate river rocks;  
 All perfectly placed by antiquity's craftsmen  
 In tandem with this nearby stone step  
 Down into pristine paradise.

Like a gutted fish  
 The musician's whole stomach spills out:  
 His Hara hurls that first, bass, torrential wash  
 Shrieking into the upper registers  
 To worry the torii-gated waters  
 Of heaven's under-skull  
 With kami-voices  
 Versed in ethereal dominae.

Shakuhachi #2

Slashed obliquely outward,  
A bone Tsu inserted at the blowing-edge,  
This mysterious Japanese Shakuhachi  
---A cousin to its western ancestor  
The Chinese Hsiao---  
Births its sinuous wind-blown evocations  
To the ancient-throated voice of  
Earlier travellers to the Deep North  
---Forgotten spirits, courtesans, homeless  
Ronin, priests, geishas, monks, cave-dwelling  
Hermits---  
On this narrow road through a moment's fragile  
Perception into the Great Awakening.

What is this still-garden serenity....this  
Sound of flute and fluttering heart?

REP '94

\* For Masayuki Koga