

Aside. How else explain loss? For in shrill
Heart-thrummings still

In memory comes our deepest longing. Why
Else would there be

Babies in anonymous earth, or scraps
Of saints in heaps

For sale? Transcendence is the way to God
And through our load:

Flickerings of the sharpest joy that we know now
By passing through.

—Kim Bridgford

Love

It's the O that does it, gasp of pain
Or then again

Joy. You could drown in it, the mirror-lake
That means bad luck

For some, the icy kiss on the lungs, the shore
Just an unsure

Line in the past. It's babies that make do
With the long O

Ahead of them, the tunnel to life. When the howl
Comes to them all,

It's the central O-gasp, then the safe
Wide arms of earth

That widen into death. How can our love
Make us forgive

That emptiness? O, sings the choir, the boy
In a reply

To water from a stone; O, says the man
Whose skeleton

Finds sorrow in his blood. Remember this
Antithesis;

Remember the deep drop into hope, the hum
Of the hymn,

And then the sweetness of water, the tongue now full
And bountiful.

—Kim Bridgford

CONTRIBUTORS

Kim Bridgford is an associate professor of English at Fairfield University. She has published more than three hundred poems in various journals and recently received a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship to work on a collection entitled "Balancing Paradise."

Donna Campbell is an associate professor of English at Gonzaga University. Her interests in local color and regional fiction led to her important book, *Resisting Regionalism: Gender and Naturalism in American Fiction, 1885–1915*.