

Slices of Sex In Memory

by John McKernan

Woven
Into a laurel wreath

Spliced
Into a noose
Of cobras

Threaded
Into the silence
Within
A sheet of water on ice

Slipped
Under a fingerprint
As a thorn
From a rose
A stolen blue rose

Call the Plumber

by John McKernan

This sky is starting
To leak light

The pornographic actress
Is modeling shadows at the football stadium
Chanting

I am the real goddess Venus
I grovel at the speed of light
My lecture on gravity
Will get you into any medical school

Let's see
The tattoos I want for Christmas
The Speed of Light on my right palm
The Law of Gravity on this thumb
The Seven Flavors of Prism in my left palm

Miss Swan Believed

by John McKernan

We all could know everything in time
About time

She spent time every day
For four weeks on Roman numerals
Clepsydras & Moon phases & Wrist watches

Michael Plunkett
Who never learned the alphabet
Dozed all day in the back row
In the shape of an hourglass

He would smile all the time
Keep big kids from teasing little ones
Point to the ceiling fan and giggle
All that year tiny pieces of the sundial
Began to sprout their weeds in my skull

Heart

by John McKernan

Of wild duck
In the shape of an arrow

I love to chew you Hot Grilled
Brown
Fragrant

Gristle-thick
Rice-woven
Wheat-threaded
Gift of my bow & a thick white cloud

Against the blue sky
Of my teeth &
The frozen lake
Of my cracked teeth
Protect me from my lies

Relax Heart

by John McKernan

Put your hand firmly on the hand rail
Smile in silence

Your shadow
Forms a melodic X-Ray
Falling on the piccolo of the ribs

On the flute lifting
Through white vertebrae
The pink blossom
Of the brain

Remember your endless fear of heights
Roller coasters
Bell towers
Even the piddly bridges
Across the muddy Missouri River

You had your first hint
Of this species of vertigo
In your mother's tight red womb
Listening to her heart beat
Teach you all the syllables
You would ever hear on this earth

Here Coffin

by John McKernan

Here Earth
Here Ashes

That year
I kept calling
My favorite dogs

Their nicknames
And they listened
Like the kind dumb animals
They were

Their fur Soft as blue shadow
Breath Sour & hot in violet twilight
Those hounds Those beautiful disobedient curs
Who never believed me about the highway
About my neighbors' poisons & rifles

After today
All gone
All five
Transported to the kingdom of maggot
Where Yesterday lives
Its mouth stuffed with brown fur

© 2010 John McKernan