

## Bob Perelman

### REPRODUCTION

This poem doesn't even know what I am telling it.  
You know nothing, do you hear! Nothing!

I am looking at *The Garden of Earthly Delights*,  
berries on heads, assholes for flower vases,  
and all the bodies pale, similar,  
glazed to keep the pleasure in.

Where's Waldo? Where's now?  
I can't tell, and don't know where  
our machined desire fits,  
but I can't ask you, you don't have a clue,  
do you? And you're the one  
that gets to be read.  
Turn your trick.  
Model your breathless pregnancy.

### OHIO

You start out with the neighbors' air conditioners humming into the fresh Ohio morning. They are outside you, and this is all to the good, for subjective purposes. Judging by the lawns, the antennas and the lilacs, there seems to be little interest in verbal technique as such. But the overwhelming attention to ownership and to children makes a word mean as much out there as anywhere in here. Irony can lash out unpredictably, but that's as true in a sixteen-year-old as in a sentence. In and out are just teases

anyway: it's not bodies, but what we want to do. It's not language in some motiveless space, but the pull between letting go and getting everything tied down. Time is a factor, too, though it's quick to congeal into monuments. Mossy stones, tour buses idling in the sun, "Cursed be he who moves these bones" or should it be "reads these letters"? But that's the