

Bob Hicok

BUILDING A PAINTING A HOME

If I built a barn I'd build it right into the sky

with windows twice as large as walls and ringed
with theoretical pines, clumps of green on simple sticks

and doors cut from the ocean, doors that wave
and doors that foam and shadows inside to eat

every cow I own because I'm afraid of cows,
two stomachs imply that aliens are involved,

moo is what the brain-washed say, my fields
would be green until yellow and yellow

until white, acres of albino wheat
for the manufacture of weightless bread,

I only eat what floats in a house that spins
as the weather vane turns, a house that follows

a rooster in love with wind, the sky
and my barn are blue and the sky also floats,

there's nothing to hold anything down,
even eternity's loose and roams the erotic

contortions of space, even my children
recognize tomorrow better than they remember

today, if I built a barn I'd build the land
and the sun before that, I'd spread the canvas flat

with my hands and nail it to the dirt, I'd paint
exactly what I see and then paint

over that until by accident something habitable
appears, until the kettle screams on the stove,

until the steam is green and the sound is gold.