

The Point of the Western Pen / Etheridge Knight

(for my son, Etheridge Bombata)

Where come we from? and so forth?
The point of the western pen is red
With the blood of us. The pages of Harlem,
Timbuctoo, Waycross, flutter
And float on the midnight waters
And turn to flowers.

Where come we from? and so forth?
The point of the western pen is red
With the blood of us. You, me.
The sages sing.
We sunflowers facing the east,
Dancing in the wind and folding at night.

Under the noon-day light
We drop, red petal by red petal
Into the mid-night waters,
Into the rushing, swirling waters.
Where come we from? and so forth?
The point of the western pen is red
With the blood of us.

The Old Women of Paris / Dudley Randall

In the Boulevard Raspail
from classic grey apartments
with show windows displaying
new cars and antique treasures

morning bright young women
in orange, red and green
pour to the blue canvas stalls upon the grass
for fresh fruits and vegetables

and at dusk black-gowned women
their backs curved like bridges across the Seine