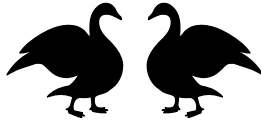


FRUIT EXPLOSION



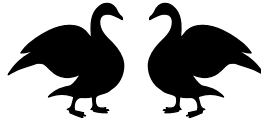
An innocent can of peaches  
like a bomb in *The Cabinet  
of Dr. Caligari*. Years ago,  
I saw the movie, phantasmagoric

magic lantern show. Bone  
suits dancing before black  
curtains, all the benefits  
of home. Nuclear family drama

on a hot afternoon. Those  
peaches hail from the Greenbrier,  
a class establishment.  
Of fallout bunkers, I remembered,

our hidden White House, in West  
Virginia hills. The squat 64oz.  
can puckered top and bottom  
like jiffy-pop before it blew.

PAPER GAINS



The brains have been at it again,  
even the landscape's paper, trees  
pulped and piled. Sheets of formulas,  
maybe a poem or two  
composed midst seas of other things,  
and mountains become reams,  
geologic time  
compressed to a thin sheaf. What

were we thinking?  
Not of insects we insisted on calling  
“bugs.” Soon it was nothing living,  
only a kink in a machine.  
Not of banana peppers, not of bell-  
wethers, umbrellas, potency  
or potbellied stoves. My grandmother  
stoked one and rang children

to lessons with her wooden-handled,  
brass bell, which sits on my school desk  
of pressed board, heavier  
than thick pancakes of solid maple.  
Everything looks so substantial  
until a sprinkler misfires

or it rains through the ragged window,  
each of us going on thinking.