

## **the city's totem**

melting snow sculpts the outline  
of this parliament of faces in reverse  
the sidewalk council slings at us  
davids setting altar-shop in street lamps  
praying stations where acolytes goliath  
hold hidden vigil on the bus  
to the city's totem

its subway snarl, it's electric pulse  
bemoaning the buildings and skyscrapers  
like flowerpots trapping growth  
in the name of culture and tribe  
weeds which tremble in the face  
of their steely partners' throat betrothed  
to the city's emblem

on the grid but out of sight  
fueled by moon's pearlescent light  
which pales to the nuisance of neon  
these dreams can only come out at night  
a taxi screech, the footstep drums  
incarcerated, asphyxiated all  
newly baptized from alley puddles  
demons joining in the paean  
to city and its shadow

its intimately hidden graffiti tattoos  
and asphalt cracks like fingerprints  
highway synapse and citizen cells  
jagged angles and stunted squares  
alloy casted clanging stairs and  
boulevards bursting at the beams  
in unison the congregation chants  
under news copter whose rotor propels  
the city's swinging gallows

a prayer of resurrection singing:  
who knows how bright  
the spirit's glowing sign  
when the city's totem comes alive