ORACLE

Stanley Mason

You who in the crystal night
Call upon my name no name
Mirage-dwelling eremite
Helium-shod and lipped with flame

Poet, human unicorn
Fugitive before the fact
Living in the bubble blown
By creation's act no act

Captive in a castle spun
By your art in thinnest air
Love your wheeling sun no sun
Grief the moon of your despair

Go your way with hope no hope
The earth was made to be your pall
Truth will hang you on her rope
Through all the skies I see you fall

See you fall and twist and fade
Love no love has loves enough
Speech the wanton wields the spade
Poems are a transient stuff

Earth awaits a wilful child
Darkness drowns the bright-edged breath
Not a poppy to uphold
The madman's myth of death no death

Yet wait, I see the earth's womb swell
Some secret seed will not forget
A fountain springs, a magic well
Death shall have you yet not yet

I see the petals rimmed with fire
The wide leaf spread, the calyx gleam
All the lilies of desire
Floating on your dream no dream

GENEALOGY IN A TREE TOP

Gerald N. White

Lodged in their unfinished symphony of growth,
confined like notes in an unborn manuscript,
the unhatched bubbles of sound stir restlessly
in their home-made incubator of mud and leaf.

To the parent robins I have donated my backyard elm
and the sanctity of a delivery room twelve branches high
where the calcium shells of melody can explode in song
from beneath the maternal warmth of down and feather.

As infant vibration swells into adult rhapsody
this garden will become a testing ground; this earth a larder;
this window-sill an auditioning stage; this receptive heart
a filled-to-capacity auditorium for each recital.

These fragile minstrels will attempt no innovation,
nor intricate rhythm to trick the tone-deaf ear,
nor factory-coated capsule of banality from
some assembly-line production of retarded hits.

No hit parade can chart their great inheritance,
for harmony is life, and songs are memories;
the songsters may be new, but their tunes are set
like melodic residue on the scales of time.