

THE IMAGINED PLEASURES OF ORANGES

HOMAGE TO FRANCIS PONGE

Pleasure deferred
as someone once said
(or might have said)
is pleasure multiplied

Consider this small firm orange
which I grasp carefully
in one hand
and raise to my nostrils
taking its tart scent
(despite an incipient sneeze)
deep into my lungs

Imagine
digging fingernails
into its unevenly pebbled skin
the release of minute acrid spores
the diminution
as the thick peel is discarded
uncovering an almost smooth whiteness
on its inner side
then the separation of the flesh
into precise segments
each containing its cargo
of edible fruit
juicy, refreshing and evanescent
the whole procedure
concluding
with my tongue encircling my lips
to remove the last trace

my moist fingers reaching for a tissue