

Where shall we mark the center,
The firm, omphalic navel of the universe?
Once, it was Delphi and her treasures,
Now, it is man; his love.

EARTHLIGHT

Thomas Burnett Swann

And in that dark devoid of a wind,
The astronauts set hard, metallic shoes
Athwart the moon's black dust. With moonlight lost,
What Artemis remained for men to lose,

What Ishtar or Selene, turn to ash?
Below their ship—a soundless monolith
Star-pointed home—the spacemen bowed their heads,
Lamenting goddesses reduced to myth.

But while they bowed, a light came covertly
To quicken dust with apricot lagoons
Until, incomparable, the rising earth
Possessed the sky like four compounded moons

And, queen to exiles of the lunar night,
Divided to their need her warm earthlight.