

ON THE STREET BE SINGIN'

pork pie hat
towers above the endless mass
the brother's rancorous music box
 and short defiant strides
turning heads
a woman's greyhaired
dark glass composition
and a restless executive's
mordant sigh
a japanese woman's tattered dress
the remnants of yellow peril indigenous
 sistersoul kicks back radiant like oil
 that sheik caught her eye
 he strutting down main street
cool
 but on this granite sidewalk
mama's barefoot chile put 'em in the fountain
for relief.

—Jeff Langford

MY UNCLE PLAYED THE SAX

Brown face glistening,
Eyes dancing,
He be-bopped through my childhood,
Carrying Dizzy, and 'Trane,
And Bird, and Dexter,
And all my heroes,
In that same beat-up, black case,
Where he carried his saxophone.

—Louis E. Bryan

MRS. CAMERON'S BABY

Every day she'd pass by,
Pushing an old baby carriage,
"Mornin' Mrs. Cameron!"
I'd yell from across the street,
"Mornin' young man," she'd answer politely.
What more could a small boy say,
To a poor old woman,
Pushing the memory of her long dead child?

—Louis E. Bryan