

THE EXHIBITIONISTS

Gaudy. Shameless. Swaggering.
Vast expanses of hardwoods vested
in orange and amber tapestry. Oak colonies
studding the display with garnet flash.
The tallest pines and spruces among them
state their almost overwhelmed points
the only way they can.
Complementary clouds moving closer,
some blushing, hang low to take it all in.

There's even a sweeping swath of blue water,
blue enough to turn Levi Straus green
with envy, knowing his aniline dyes
can't compete.

How do they dare such flamboyance
in the face of advancing claws of cold
and sleet? It isn't a victory show,
it's a taunt. Don't they know they're headed
for humiliating loss, struck bare and brown,
rough skeletons stripped of all glory?

Or do they feel deep in the heartwood--
this time--this year
their splurges of ostentation will overcome?
Stunned by such outrageous pomp--
winter may surrender.