

RECLAMATION

To think such common clumsy things as words  
Can flow into a sonnet's silken woof  
And leave no ragged edge, no scattered sherds  
To mock the lyricist with sharp reproof.  
Those verbs we stroke or hammer into forms,  
Nouns passing through the streets or on the air,  
Those pieces of foundations, parts of storms,  
Odd patches of old cultures past repair--  
The tarnished heaps we've spat out, killed with, wasted,  
Can always be re-used to build and mend  
In spite of all the bitter tongues they tasted,  
Can be proclaimed again, a finer blend.  
    Our human alchemy can salvage curses,  
    Recycle slag, create new songs and verses.