

THE PROSE POEM: AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL

Volume 7 | 1998

Rocky Hill: Ground And Figure Mary Elizabeth Lang

© Providence College

The author(s) permits users to copy, distribute, display, and perform this work under the following conditions: (1) the original author(s) must be given proper attribution; (2) this work may not be used for commercial purposes; (3) the users may not alter, transform, or build upon this work; (4) users must make the license terms of this work clearly known for any reuse or distribution of this work. Upon request, as holder of this work's copyright, the author(s) may waive any or all of these conditions.

The Prose Poem: An International Journal is produced by
The Berkeley Electronic Press (bepress)
for the Providence College Digital Commons.
<http://digitalcommons.providence.edu/prosepoems/>

Mary Elizabeth Lang

ROCKY HILL: GROUND AND FIGURE

A child is taken to a park where dinosaur footprints are on display under a plastic dome. *See? See there?* But he sees nothing, only empty spaces where sandy shale is not. In concerts he listens for the intervals. He cannot learn to read sheet music, for he sees only the holes in the whole notes and hears music in the curves of the rests. In reading class his eye skips to the spaces between words and his ear picks up the breaths between sentences. He sits patiently in school and learns nothing; the minute the dismissal bell stops ringing he begins to be educated. As he grows to manhood, he falls in love with the white spaces that surround the profiles of silent women in silhouettes. He sings hymns during liturgical silences, prays on Mondays and works on the Sabbath. He knows that when he dies he will go to Limbo, even though the rabbis have never acknowledged it and the priests have declared it deserted.