

# THE PROSE POEM: AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL

Volume 2 | 1993

**Night River**  
Michael Bowden

© 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/>

## **Michael Bowden**

### NIGHT RIVER

Though the night river moves on, the stars on its back remain. If not forever, for long enough, as far as we're concerned. We'll all be gone before they can assume new patterns and identities. Tonight there's still room in your pocket for one smooth stone, its patina of heat. Though it's true, as the experts say: you're as likely to find a spent matchbook as a key in the yellow beam of your flashlight. Or a paperclip turned back on itself, holding nothing. In the end, of course, a hole mysteriously appears in your tennis shoe. You cross your leg to look at it, calculating the miles you've come. Sighing like Galileo the night he found Saturn in his telescope. Believing the planet had ears, he brushed bread crumbs from his chin and immediately gave up his profound old loneliness. But not without regret—so accustomed had he grown to it.