**Idora Park; Youngstown, Ohio (1899-2001)**

At the end of a trolley line, a century turns

and the most perfect name for an amusement park takes root

in land destined for the language of twirl and twaddle.

Damp shoulders sway in the open-air ballroom, tongues swirl

in dark tunnels—a nest for boxy boats. Roller coaster *Jack*

*Rabbit* sometimes runs in reverse—the *Back Wabbit.*

And on a lilting carousel, a cotillion of carved horses rises

likes waves, each mane more erotic than the last.

Logic takes giddy vacation

in *Laffin Lena’s* fun house, proud bruises brighten

on manic, bumper-car parades. In this park, gear grease

glistens in an empire of interlocking days.

Then came the fires. ’84. A welding torch ignited inside

*The Lost River.* ’86. The northwest quadrant in flames.

’01. The ballroom extinguished.

Mt city’s sad trilogy, then the wooden spines

of *Wild Cat* and *Jack Rabbit* bulldozed

for the currency of grass.

These days, the carousel,

pillaged and refurbished for a Brooklyn gallery,

gleams impotent and mute—

a Pentecostal congregation plots for the emptied land,

their future *City of God*—

and in postmortem, dot org merchandise prevails:

I adore the logos on thongs,

the logos on coffee mugs,

the logos on tiny shirts for dogs.

Rikki Santer

897 Plum Ridge

Columbus, Ohio 43213

(614) 897-4971

[rikkirs@hotmail.com](mailto:rikkirs@hotmail.com)

[www.rikkisanter.com](http://www.rikkisanter.com)

“Midnight at the Mill”

(anonymous artist engraving of historic Lanterman’s

Mill in Youngstown, Ohio found during renovation)

Chiaroscuro charmstone,

map of waterfall’s light,

echo chamber

gently lifted

from ash and dust.

Blessed be nameless hands

that speak, etch paradigm

through time—

its milky fire

of night sky,

luminous mists,

full moon’s canticle

for a grinding house

with manna showers

of buckwheat and corn.

Is that Dante nodding

from deep shadows?

Gustave Dore whispering

into the pulse of vigil?

Blessed be a lost engraver

who freeze-framed

alpha & omega—

our Holy Cinematographer’s

claim to fame.

Rikki Santer

897 Plum Ridge

Columbus, Ohio 43213

(614) 861-4971

[rikkirs@hotmail.com](mailto:rikkirs@hotmail.com)

www.rikkisanter.com