

Clearing the Air

Having negotiated the binary files of his tongue,
the various offices of his smiles, while acid rain
blows across the land from the chambers on Capital Hill
dissolving the paper the contract was written on

spreading across the air waves in service to
the shifting allegiance of his lips, very fine
particulates dust the crop of future consumers and those
to be consumed, shorten the breath, belabor the heart,

making the eyes smart, powdering what each
party to the act is passing palm to palm,
to ease the bearings within bearings, subsidize
military toys for the world market, adult

toys for the home market, pharmaceuticals
for the black market, cancer for unsuspecting
customers of democracy such as it is—
open market democracy oil field

democracy covert action death squad
democracy balanced budget no frills
democracy welfare cuts no insurance
poisoned waters ripped-off forests chemical food

Republicrat Investment Class democracy.
Show me the money: CEOs ball players
financial sector wizards wheeler-dealers
the flip sides of the war machine double eagle:

heads, it's transnational corporations, tails
it's bread and circuses preferably on TV and the Web —
the comforts of a mortgaged home or rented compartment
or cruising in the old guzzler listening to what

we're given to listen to: heavy beat home
boy run special effects touchdown
whatever it takes to keep us from thinking things through
while real wages drop, mortality rates go up,

the ozone hole expands, the air drips acid,
the oil and chlorine lobbies continue to win over
the number of politicians and bureau- and technocrats

they need to keep the hot air balloon afloat.