

MICHELE LEGGOTT / gala apples

somewhere in Canada Sharon Thesen
is driving a car has she found the festival
with the best shopping in the world
or is she on top of the one that begins
Red head of rose partitions the vase lip
how neatly it falls into place
Vancouver on the east side palais de danse
on the other she could drive between them
entranced by the light on Oriental Parade
as she speeds around the bays *one wants*
beginnings to burn big holes behind
the stadium a pile of dead horses
shot through their exhausted hearts

it's an old pattern Lucy Jordan
rearranged the flowers Tamara de Lempicka
monogrammed the Bugati *green machine*
beyond the ruby dahlias Eliza Hannay
went off the road near Spirits Bay
pink and silver voices on the last page
of the autobiographical novel first version

when they tell you the pure products
are crazy get your chrysanthemums
light your own way through hell
and don't be afraid to pour red wine
over your auto portrait

does she remember the long drive
to find Frances Boldereff an old lady
an architect of morning herself
red rocket tips violet surrender who filled
every margin of Finnegans Wake
with pencil notes and gave it to the latecomer
for safekeeping it is this book
that sits in the back seat as the car
turns off West 16th into Waterloo a grandma
come to sit under the roses and drink tea
with the marginalia girls that summer

Sharon Thesen swaps the tea party
for her late summer appearance
at the festival where she has to talk about
poetry wars when there is shopping
to be done did she make it
to Island Bay did she see for herself
sheer pearl of breakers in moonlight

by the Red Rocks *immense and eternal*
the weighty matter of old discussions
under the roses and the moment
right now when she's headed home
to Kelowna and The Good Bacteria sits
beside her on the front seat as good
as a bag of apples from a roadside stall
somewhere between Otaki and the Okanagan
wars and clearances tragic laughter
& *meanings, for sure* it's ok Canada
Sharon Thesen is driving the car