

3-1-1998

To the Artist of the Quattrocento

Susan E. Barba

Follow this and additional works at: <https://egrove.olemiss.edu/yr>



Part of the [Poetry Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Barba, Susan E. (1998) "To the Artist of the Quattrocento," *Yalobusha Review*. Vol. 4 , Article 35.
Available at: <https://egrove.olemiss.edu/yr/vol4/iss1/35>

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by the English at eGrove. It has been accepted for inclusion in Yalobusha Review by an authorized editor of eGrove. For more information, please contact egrove@olemiss.edu.

Susan E. Barba

To the Artist of the Quattrocento

It is night and the black windows
collect white underbellies of bugs,
map the ordered geography of dining table, chairs-
insects pressed, swarming over the flattened surfaces.
I hear a stream murmuring through woods
beyond this strange collage, spilling night
secrets after running hushed by day.

Too many distractions under the sun's bright eye-
eyes everywhere at once and multiplied.
You'd think our other senses would be sharpened,
seeing as we do, half-blinded by the glare
objects attract, bathing in description:
light explodes from a corn field,
and the eye yields up its harvest to the sun.

But once the towel is thrown over that brilliant bird,
veiling a purple grackle, busy in furrows, tearing
kernels from the cobs, sun dipping low, and absurd-
how it disappears to light the other hemisphere,

I see that truth and change are braided grasses
in a Chinese handcuff tightening to the pull,
or the unbordered puzzle of light becoming dark becoming
light-
that to paint this canvas vibrantly by day
is not to guard against indefinite paling
...grass giving up green beneath snow,
but to ensure a darkening, no, deepening with age.