

I — trains

The subway
Crowded subway car
Mass packed humanity
Carefully avoiding human contact while pressed together,
A mockery of an intimate dance.

We sway in rhythm
To the klik klik clicking of the steel tires on rails
A push and surge
The exodus replaced by the inflow
People busy with their day

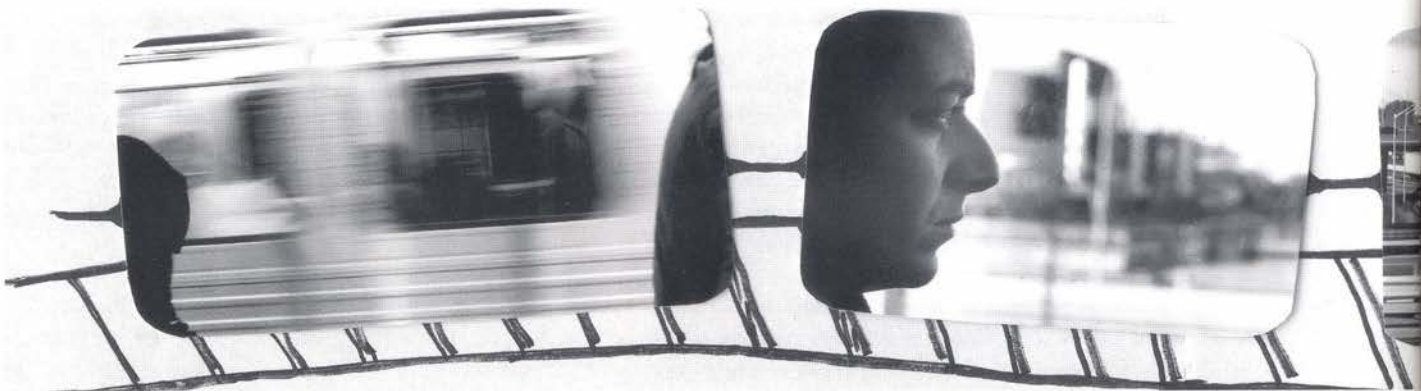
Ironic
The pressed flesh, frantically impersonal
Denying the interconnectedness of all things
Our underground bubble
Tunnelling through the streets of Toronto
Beneath the rapping strides of city dwellers
Pretending they are alone.

I take it as a challenge
To elicit a smile from some passerby
Wonder, beneath my daring act,
How long before I, too, refuse to look up,
Refuse to meet the eyes
Of those who pass me by

I could get lost here, in this city
This Mega-city of 4 million souls.
I could lose myself in the invisibility of being face to face
With a stranger on a subway car
Who doesn't see me.
It would be frighteningly easy to disappear.

Trans itions

by Jackie Kennelly



II — stations

Does it strike anyone else as STRANGE
I want to turn to the person beside me,
Or proclaim to the crowd lining up
Docilely, complacently, for the bus to shuttle them away—
Does it strike ANYONE else as STRANGE
That NO ONE is talking?

All York students, all going to the same place
And no one says a word.
Neither do I, though words burn within me.

III – locations

The silent bus roars past stretches of strip malls
A sign reads International Women Free Dances Every Night
I ponder this strange mix of words
 Free Dances for International Women?
Women-Free Dances for Foreigners?

We arrive on campus: where are all the people?
Vast expanses of blank land,
Devoid of movement.

Plunge into the mall
 —yes, there's a mall on campus—
To be accosted by the student body.
The sheer presence,
Buzzing humanity
Fills the artificial commercial space
 Designed for consumption.

Can I possibly survive two years of that bus ride
And the presence of that mall
Without losing some essence of myself that presently stands
appalled?

