

Barbara Henning

DIGI-GRAMS (excerpts)

May 6, 2016

—outside the Art Institute—1984—in black and white—my two children—on the belly of a river god—once reclined by the Garonne in France—bare-chested—he looks over a baby angel—then over the ruins of Detroit—our birth city—your time will come, he says—Néné's seven-year-old smile—fine hair in the wind—Mook squinting—a few months later—I-80 to New York City—behind us Zug Island—and the charred remains—in Narcisse, 75,000 snakes—awaken from an eight-month nap—tumble over craggy landscape—tangled knots—a single aim—reproduction—a single mom—how I miss them—my children as children—today's light over the shrubs—a small plane coasting through the sky—rushing into the car—crying over a scrape—a little league baseball game—be quiet—the boys reclining—beside my grown daughter—watching tv—their feet overlapping—

Nov 27, 2016

—wake up—creaky, old—falling apart—when the winds—from the south—hit the mountains—in Tennessee—smoke and ash—obscure the night sky—to chase away misfortune—Amazonian shamans light a stick—of palo santo—to chase away misfortune—say “no” “not that”—say it loudly—like Mr. Blow—in The Times—peddle onward—to yoga—in a purple coat, red plaid scarf, green hat, grey pants, blue-green-black striped socks—colors rolling with the wind—wheels passing over—unsuspecting insects—at Bowery and First—chain up—ring bell—do the funky chicken—preen—scratch head—march in unison—poke a wing—here and there—then forward and up—with your tail—then flip flap your wings—homeward, the cement covered—in golden leaves—the air crisp—chain up—on the corner—two men—deeply inhaling—I cover my mouth and nose—with a scarf—give a five to the bodega clerk—passing the smokers again—carrying home my daily addiction—two packs of—chocolate peanut butter cups—