

Marina Puno

Delicate Autonomy

A parade of brown Merrells,
Marching through dust and rock,
Gathered like Kubrick's apes
Staring at a large, black monolith.
But here,
Rather than primates and cuboids,
An arch
Defined by gravity-defying curves
Stood solid.

At eleven,
I was astonished;
My imagination ran untamed.
Neither wind nor storm could have formed it,
But rather,
A rare, horizontally-hurling meteor or
Runaway bulldozer.

The closer I inched,
A small cloud of orange trailing behind me,
The more the arch felt
Real.
Not held up by beams or wooden buttresses,
But rather,
Supporting itself.

Eroded to an inexplicable form,
It stood untouched.
Even under the stampede of careless brown boots,
The arch prevailed.
Its rocks,
Formed with meticulous erosion,
Distinctly carved the sky.

To my prepubescent mind,
This earthly, inanimate structure,
Challenged all laws and,
In its autonomy,
Established its own.