

## Imprints

once,

in a third-rate mall, nondescript in time and place  
halfway lit, with shadows of ever-present eminent domain  
stood stationed, one of those itinerant wagons, selling knicks and  
knacks, not yet of anyone's belonging

a man,

constant, with family nearby, worked on his craft with the highest form of self-expression  
carving one of those three-dimensional concentric spheres, ball within ball  
himself, a man within man, a remnant soul within soul, in this new bazaar

the sphere,

long ago, made with exotic ivory, even jade, now from reclaimed wood  
the outer, lattice structure of beams that framed a scene inside  
were punctuated by nodes, for bended curves, for bended perspectives

inside,

the overlay, I viewed an elephant underneath a flat leafy tree that canopied  
its back, engraved with ornate swirls and motifs from unknown whereabouts, and  
while focused in on this tunnel view, I was confronted by my own presence

there,

at the junctions of observer/participant, of unfamiliar/familiar  
in between uneasiness/at ease, and on the edge of free-spiritness/homesickness  
i craved respite for homey comfort thoughts, in the baggage of my mind

then,

it came, of first travels, with me in the back, and parents up front  
our caravan, a long silver Buick, with an 8-track player for music of  
classical, jazz and music from their homeland, cycling through turns, song after song

when,

driving for long hours on gray stretches, staying in between white lines  
not unlike a child, forging his own script on school's first writing paper,  
making our own journal known to just us, on this scenic road trip

through

barren landscapes, passing red rocks, towards canyon and valley  
chasing shifting mirages from heated air rising from black tar or dry asphalt  
then, coasting along green and redwood forests buffering wind and cerulean ocean waves

i,

stood there, fixated on the imprint of yet another distant memory, a bridge with steel crossbeams  
arching high up above, forming skylights to peer out from, the inside, and, squinting at the brightness,  
lapsed me out of this trance and, ungrounded once more, brought me back full, in sight of the

here and now,

transposed, in a third-rate mall, nondescript in time and place  
halfway lit, with shadows of ever-present eminent domain  
standing stationed at one of those itinerant wagons, wanting to find a place for those knicks and  
knacks, not yet of anyone's belonging