Red Oak, Black Oak

AMY PENCE

Fog-locked trees bear forward insular mute close unclothed dis not closing bound by root subterraneous leaf. _ shorn time waved rocky insomniacs marching ghost like back-lit etched upper branches arterial pumping dormant seeds they gather, gray frayed by winter sentinent red oak burr oak black like egos our mantras dis resolving integrating silvered the horizon on conjoin our ancestors

three generations in the photo I pass by them each morning arranging my self for the day dead each faces the flash fifties two wear pillbox hats my grandmother's iron board flat my mother beams holds a figment of me my sister grasps father's hand just she and I now alive all their grievances adventures extinguished by this day my uncle our only suicide still a crewcut boy a look wears acute with longing forms incarnate & crumble as grandmother did when she found him stilled amid smoke lo, we abide so close & a part

