

Robert Vas Dias

BROOKLYN

It's prolific, maybe you never stopped  
to think: more poets were born  
in Brooklyn who don't live there any more,  
in many one- and two-family dwellings  
of identical shape and texture arranged  
in rows predominantly of brownstone,  
or brick, with now-and-again a run of limestone.

It is too large for anyone to take in  
whole in a lifetime / the sound  
from a rooftop is of a boat  
whistling down in the harbor,  
trucks hustling their loads on the Belt Parkway,  
fire, police, ambulance emergency sirens  
day and night, children playing, and jets  
in the holding-patterns for LaGuardia & JFK (not  
even in Brooklyn): it is the great breeding  
ground of America, there all problems  
and some solutions are found: no wonder  
Walt settled there for a time though he escaped  
with his poems across the river and into  
New Jersey.

In Brooklyn, thinking of vistas, always there  
are  
visions of the ensemble just visible over the  
tenements,  
across the harbor, the bridge, and over  
the enterprising, irresistible  
and always uncontrollable States.