

Lasse Söderberg

translated by Jean E. Pearson

WITH MY HEART'S CHALK

What has become of your America,
Walt Whitman? What has become
of the strong love you used to sing
and the institutions you didn't trust?
You skin-close spokesman for democracy,
what has become of your sons?
Under the Technocrats' high protection
they wallow content in the stench of gold
are swallowed up in latrines of racial hatred
where the white intestinal worms feel well.
Your America isn't yours today.
That's why I write without hesitation
right over your name, old man Whitman,
with my heart's chalk, the word Vietnam.