

Matthew Carr

**ON RIDING THE STATEN ISLAND FERRY
FOR THE FIRST TIME**

My field coat is too worn; dampness
Seeps mercilessly into me like dew
Upon the wilted goldenrod. Unless
I go inside, and rejoin all of you,
There is no doubt that this fine trip will end
In misery—the aches and pains of flu,
Belying any noble thoughts that tend
To make me feel that there's yet more to do
In life than come to books well out of date,
Or watch tv until well after two,
Or eat brief meals, or study heads of state,
Or memorize eternal yearnings' due.
But then she stands, her message borne on high:
Above the mist, alive in my mind's eye.

Gary Pacernick

TO WALT WHITMAN

I always took him to the beach with me.
His long rhapsodic lines surged with the sea
Enunciating what I so sorely lacked: faith in myself.
As his long white beard flowed over my chest,
He clasped me in his arms and whispered in my ears,
“I celebrate myself, and sing myself,
And what I assume you shall assume,
For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.”
He was as wide and deep and buoyant as the sea
That stretched before and beyond me, beckoning.
He was also a man, a brother, a friend, even a lover,
The great bard of my being, speaking the password “I am.”