

Portland Mix

Portland Mix:

a calcined mixture of clay and limestone,
mixed with sand, gravel and water.
Salmon move in from the sea.

A seven year itch
develops into a collective consciousness
and speaks to them of place.
Eight dams block their way.

Light bounces off the wet, predawn streets.
City sounds and smells
guide his feet and thoughts,
pausing at Shari's all night diner.

A black man and white woman –
shaved head and waist length red hair –
share company. One more generation
and heads will no longer turn.

Waitress at the counter:
My daughter's sixteen
and livin' with a twenty-two year old.
Keeps runnin' away. Can't keep her home.

A man sips his coffee
and swivels on the stool:
Kids these days ...
and blah, blah, blah.

Grilled cheese – American please.
Does it come with fries? For breakfast.
Conversation ebbs, and music flows.
Never not sound.

Laying down some change,
he walks out into the dawn,
cognizant of the fact:
You can't step in the same stream twice.

And probably, you wouldn't want to.

