

Cornelia Hoogland

Difference is the Beauty

Women dressing and undressing
in a steamy bathroom
in a converted schoolhouse,
their breast-continuum like the ample
belly of the bell curve.
Sixteen pair. Not a silicone
tear-shape, not a pin-up
among the jingle-swing
also the small cuppable
parade of them. These
fruit tinted gold as day
light through the window.

Women drop terry robes
and towels. Each pair
of symmetrical breasts
different from each other pair
(and one has lost its mate).
Each an original that resists
the endless reproduction of perfection
—those stacks of plastic *K-Mart* salad bowls.
Instead a gardener's variegated delight.

Along the cedar fence the mock orange
blooms its fragrance of feathers,
feathers Ann scatters
just before the group photograph
which makes us a little crazy
reaching up for the white petals
drifting our thirty arms braiding.