

SARAH KENNEDY

Occupation

III. Academic Building (Early Modern Studies: Anatomy Lesson)

The hairline

plucked to a plain,
hair noosed to

raise the sheet

of the forehead.

Corsets not

the iron maidens

the Victorians

sucked themselves into

but not a portrait

that doesn't feature

a flattened breast.

Kids

with old-man faces

stuck on stubby necks.

But heigh-ho

for the Elizabethans,

for the monarch

who threw her shoes and whacked

the ears off offending

preachers. Fairy

Queen, Cult of the Virgin,
forget Mary
Stuart, lacking one head,
blindfolded Jane,
groping
for the chopping block—let's look at
Gwerful Mechain.
But which one?—the devout
one who sings songs
to God or the sexy
one who writes odes
to her body? Oh, Jane,
she cried out to the crowd
who had gathered
to watch her die,
fingers closing on air:
where is it, good people,
give me some help.