

The Dissolving Hour
by jeffrey reid pettis

as they toss pebbles to the sunset in its dissolving hour,
the arcs of their stones cascade in silhouette,
and are reclaimed by the parking lot pavement.

in the afterglow of summer, the tosspots drunk on autumn
savour the splash of frenetic reds enkindling the halls
of leaves along the highway. unoaked chardonnay on fire.

they drink until the flame fades and veils of frost descend
upon their memories: gossamer draped over failed polaroids,
the undeveloped white of winter, amnesiac.

later they feel the ache of phantom limbs
in the struggle to remember, the loss implied
in cataracts, of what falls out of frame, unfocused.

surely there had been a year, but what had it been for?
the ripple unnoticed by the concrete? the music
of stone trickling on stone? echoes written into scores?