

UCLA

American Indian Culture and Research Journal

Title

Flight

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/0878c4pg>

Journal

American Indian Culture and Research Journal , 35(3)

ISSN

0161-6463

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Publication Date

2011-06-01

DOI

10.17953

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LITERATURE



Flight

Jennifer Elise Foerster

Driving north I swallow rain. Clouds
contract, heave. The pavement is a slick gash
darkening beneath the evening.

I loosen my grip on the steering wheel,
open my window to the chorus of women:
Listen they say.
But she was only a whore.

As a child I tossed
every one of my imaginary friends
out the window of a fast moving train
because I wanted to feel
the bulb of my hands seize
open as I freed them,
as each of their bodies
whipped against the siding,
their insides: snow
dispersing into wind,
their little heads rolling
across the yellow plains.

Because I believed they would return.
But none have since.
Not even the ones I didn't love.

JENNIFER ELISE FOERSTER was a Wallace Stegner Fellow in Poetry at Stanford University from 2008 to 2010. Her poetry has been published in *Ploughshares*, *Passages North*, *Many Mountains Moving*, and *Drunken Boat*. Of German, Dutch, and Muscogee descent, she is a member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma. Foerster lives in San Francisco where she works as a grant writer and freelancer for nonprofit development.

Going West

In the last museum
of the American West

I am a still life with skull
and writing quill.

You are a book
open to the sketch of a tree:
coins, trumpet, ivory horn.

I am a painting of a woman
peeling an apple—

blunt knife, white flesh,
curl of red skin on dress.

You are a photograph of Christ
resting on a plastic sun-bed
in a motel pool in western Nevada.

The greasy air from a fast food joint
wafts across the pavement—

a lone tohee swaggers
sun-drunk on tar.

In the exit hall—
a highway,

pigeons drowned
in propane puddles.

How fertile the earth
because of our death.

Rows of headless sunflowers.