6-15-2007

Cash Entry Silver Mine

Stephen Lefebure

Follow this and additional works at: https://dc.swosu.edu/westview

Part of the Fiction Commons, Nonfiction Commons, Photography Commons, and the Poetry Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://dc.swosu.edu/westview/vol26/iss1/34

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at SWOSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Westview by an authorized administrator of SWOSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact phillip.fitzsimmons@swosu.edu.
Cerrillos manages to disavow
The present, as does any good retreat.
In the little hills north of this town
(Considered for the capitol, but now
Used in films like Young Guns for the street
Where heroes strafe the opposition down)
I found the ruins of this mine, somehow
Collapsed and yet improbably complete.
Its colors faded to a khaki brown
But nonetheless a stage which might allow
The past to rise and silently repeat
The labors which had given it renown.

Examine any object from the late
Nineteenth century—perhaps a pen
Or rocking horse. However made, it will
Seem inseparable from its date,
Impossible for any time but then.
Yet here, as if that age were with us still.
Will the things that we use also wait
A century until the hour when
They too become significant, until
Someone like me appears and must debate
Leaving them intact, or, as may happen,
Abstracting them away from some gray hill?

Those who toil with things, and know them better,
Those who keep the seasons of the year
Like a set of friends whom they could never
Lose, and take the dry years with the wetter.
Those who had these objects to hold near
At end of day, at morning, or whenever—
Perhaps one miner here who was a debtor,
And drank, perchance, at times to calm his fear,
Gave this rocking horse, to have forever,
To his child, while mother knit a sweater—
People like the folks who labored here
Are wiser than we are, who are more clever.
In the things we cherished and neglected.
In all those tools and toys which we thought fit
To love and then discard, transfer or hide,
Was there not some truth that we respected,
In each pick and shovel, in the knit
Sweater, in the toy we used to ride,
Was there not some reason we collected
More than need would probably admit—
Was there not some secret held inside?
In everything we handled, we detected
Worlds inside of worlds, an infinite
Series where our lives were multiplied.

I came here twenty years ago and found
These structures and a large retaining wall.
Today the homes have vanished, and the shaft
Is covered, an abyss locked in the ground.
A pebble tossed inside of it would fall
Forever, I remember, and I laughed
Nervously when it produced a sound.
It felt impertinent for me to call
Down, and when I did a sudden waft
Of ancient air arose from those profound
Depths, as if they knew to answer all
Questions with an aromatic draft.