

A photograph of a brick wall with shadows cast on a light-colored surface in the foreground. The shadows are dark and elongated, suggesting a low sun position. The text is overlaid on the image, starting with a bolded title and followed by a long paragraph of prose.

**FAMILY PORTRAIT** (Wexner Center for the Arts, The Ohio State University, March 2007). I stand apart, daydreaming Technicolor, technicalities (the camera—my call to the arm's length). In deed, my shadow—like yours—bespeaks shades of gray, black, and white, the newly relined afternoon's delight of what unites (and separates). Lin's *Groundswell* (1992-93)—Maya technology—deftly knells a landscape of the feminine, that barren plenitude of anticipation, which blinds the fruits' softest spots, the melancholy of what is not. *A Strong Clear Vision*. Bells ring murkier for me, a mercurial rise and fall, the indecision of spring, a springboard for revisiting Antigone's, *Will you share the labor, share the work?* Your father and I began, a broader politics of the question, *Will you help me have a child?* I cannot write about this now; something eruptive interrupted. In the bedroom, Ricardo Ruiz's *The Songs My Father Taught Me Are the Songs I Teach My Son* (1994) awaits, another landscape—a father and son extend a hand to a tree draped in lilac, pre-Pentecostal as Lent. Lent to my imagination (the pitfalls of allegorical overidentification), before you were born I sang a song, too, *I am the reluctant tree. Your father's the figure linking you to me. Why do you also hold the hand of death?* The question flush-flared a truce when I least expected it. *Through a glass darkly*, I witnessed the rush to gift rebirth—an artificial resurrection, patikia, like flowers, blooming on your limbs. I watched three shades float-flee, cloak themselves in mourning, partake of a caretaking. Since then, that shadow economy, a second wind, kinship-diagrams the unfamiliar—our portrait, a groundswell of broken glass, asymmetrical as your legs' circumferences, a stark remainder of blockage, the paradox of the hourglass' torrential embargo.



**PIPE DREAM** Her crowning glory—  
a crinkled nose, a cloud of smoke. One thing  
leads to another, she chokes. *Why buy the cow  
when you can get the milk for free?* The lecturers  
abhorred modernization. A story should linger  
in the air like smoke. Unlike a woman, poised to  
be deposed. A rival's arrival, an ever-receding  
horizon—she deserves all that and more—to be.  
Postscriptural economies: put that in your pipe  
and smoke it. *Ceci n'est pas une pipe.* All right.  
Put that in your purse and tote it. What a handy-  
dandy convertible! The top, UP↑DOWN↓, leaves  
room to grow. At least an inch-and-a-half in  
the toes. The crowd goes gaga. Dada's so passé.  
But, hey, who doesn't dream of a Father's knee,  
bent in supplication? (... *to be continued...*)  
A stranger stops her on the street to let her know  
she's sprung a leak. *Got milk?*, he grins. She  
store-fronts, *Please, who needs milk without  
cookies? And, my cookie jar's always full.*