

No Thru Traffic

These we called "words." – Michael Slosek

If art were part
of life
one more item
in the epic catalog
Material Culture
& life were
a super art
then the poem
would be realia
you could pair
with any other
choice at table
for a dash
of tears
& sweat

That bland flavor
is an acquired taste
like the emotion
or tranquility
of another person
& also like them
is a function
of the mutation
of instinct
with age

Vicarious states
give off an affect
the apparatus

brands and sells
there are people
who call that trade
in gratification
& fulfillment
Art

The legion
of versifiers
write
as if
having survived
into old age
people
who still bother
reading poetry
do so
because it goes
with food
& drink
not because
in a poem
the hope
that someday
pain & pleasure
will mind their own business
stands forth
with distinct contours
dignified
rather than bleary
smeared obvious
mumbling
the thwarted half-measures
called Life