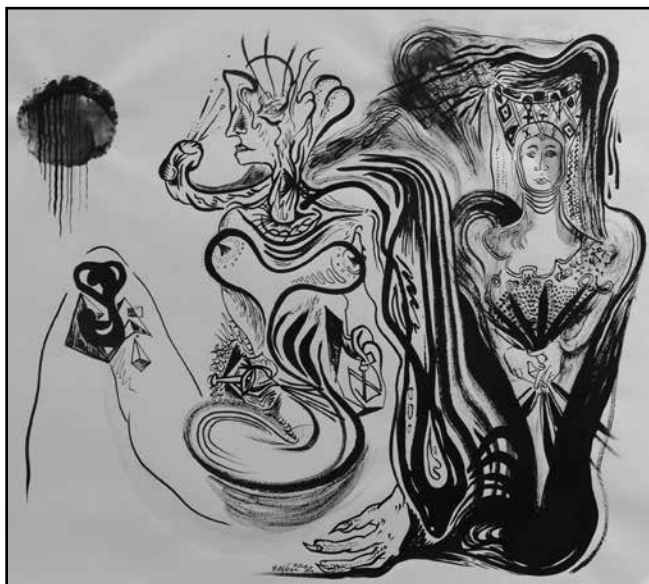


POETRY

*Stephen Eric Berry & John Elkerr*

THE ELEVENTH MUSE

I find you on the Zeppelin Electraxis, at the end of the bar, sipping a mellifera cocktail, bristled feeding tube happily extended, dressed to the elevens in fanfold crêpe paper. Your scarves are a chirography of plumrose verses, wings angled at a festive forty-five degrees for maximum torque. The braided flagella, blackish-green eyes, pollen trails contrailing the room—all testify to your sexual insomnia, tight as the ship's hawsers going falsetto with storm, tighter than my drone eye on a trek down your abdominal spiracles as the room goes dark with river country passing below. You turn to me and the glass spikelets hemming your gown sound off. You take me in as I imagine Mistress Bradstreet appraised her river elm, expecting everything and nothing beside a dizzy Merrimack of poems.



*The Eleventh Muse* by John Elkerr

18" x 21"

Ink on paper

Text by Stephen Eric Berry