

Whiteworld

Patricia Barber

I arrive in the jungle
in my new khaki clothes
make a splash in a pontoon plane
bought and paid for by those

who demand a tally
of the dark horse, the bad seed
poking and prodding progenitors
of respiratory disease are we

Whiteworld

I have institutions in the West
to make institutions in the East
I historically revise
with Deconstructionist ease

to name is to own
to market is to steal
I'm a gangster in a Hummer
& this culture will yield to me

Whiteworld

my policy is straight
my publisher primed
the natives will not
resist this time

cause I've got celebrity
I translate, I teach
I give my heart, my soul,
my brains, my body, and my
batteries

Whiteworld

bridge (Sophocles)
I came on my journey
to a juncture of three roads
two men in a chariot
made it impossible to go

I struck the driver
for pushing me aside
the old man struck me back
so that I
had to kill them all

Whiteworld

I can change water into wine
solve the riddle for the Sphinx
I like the perfectly primitive
cause they desperately need

my sovereignty

over Third World Thebes
I'm a First World Oedipus
and Mother Earth is
down on her knees

Whiteworld