

Martien Jerry poem 2006.doc

Jerry Martien. From a visit as part of the Blue River Writers Gathering of 2006

return of the dead log people

(at the H.J. Andrews Experimental Forest Long-Term Decomposition Site)

thank you for your participation in the blue river bone orchard's first bicentennial morticultural conference: the role of the dead in carbon budgeting. But don't think of it as over and done / we are still everything to come

all the indignities you're afraid will happen to you
happen here

all the mortal invasions you keep from the house of the living / from the porches
of your ears / the eaves of your seeing / openings you don't want eaten into
/eggs
hatching like little ideas in your brain / microbes growing furry unspeakable
words on your tongue / the dark juices of your heart
gone to feed the living

upstart salal and Oregon grape
sapling of cedar & hemlock & fir
thriving in our cold wet breath

perceived by you as a chill in the air / in your bones /those green bones
with which you thought you'd walk away from here
unchanged

but in your breath now
our breath

& in our breath
these words

which you will remember by a new / stiffness in your limbs
a whisper in your many-branched veins / & at last by

silence

& time

& your dust will rain on us with the rain & we will take you in as easily as you
breathed our air today

we eagerly await your input.