

The Art Room

By Shara McCallum

for my sisters

Because we did not have threads
of turquoise, silver, and gold,
we could not sew a sun nor sky.
And our hands became balls of fire.
And our arms spread open like wings.

Because we had no chalk or pastels,
no toad, forest, or morning-grass slats
of paper, we had no colour
for creatures. So we squatted
and sprang, squatted and sprang.

Four young girls, plaits heavy
on our backs, our feet were beating
drums, drawing rhythms from the floor;
our mouths became woodwinds;
our tongues touched teeth and were reeds.

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