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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