

Portland Streetcar Dance

By Marilyn Moody

a tourist steps on and stands squarely
and stupidly in the middle of the aisle,
slide and glide, slide and glide, dance.

the hipster dude all gauges and beard,
I don't look up, I know the moves, up and down,
twirl, twirl, twirl, here's my chance.

Blanket Man is always Blanket Man and
is naked underneath his blanket today.
Blanket Man does not dance.

a woman jumps on with a ferret around her neck,
the driver shouts, "Not without a box, not without a box!"
she shouts back, "Fuck you, my ferret is sick!"

the full moon-intoxicated riders,
stumble as they try to do the two-step,
lurch, scream, curse, mutter, stare, dance.

the young summer-travelers panhandle,
pit bulls and sleeping bags beside them,
their dark dark dance of secrets and pain.

an angry man with chaos tattooed
across his knuckles, and stars upon
his face, a most twisted dance to avoid.

oh, the homeless in Portland sleep under the bridges,
they smell of sweet earth and diesel,
as we dance around their loneliness.

but I sleep in my narrow bed high above
the streetcar tracks, I listen to its rumble,
as I dance and dance in my faithful dreams.

