

## ROSS CLARK

### THE ROOF RITUAL

Just past sixty and  
retirement, my father

comes unexpectedly  
with ladder and bucket,

insisting *No Son, I'll do it.*  
*You hold the ladder.*

*With canvas gloves he*  
*scoops dollops of black*  
and tacky leafmould  
from the guttering,

spilling some on my  
head and shoulders

as I hold the ladder  
steady under him. His

love is in the eloquence  
of not saying much.

## MARK MAHEMOFF

### SECURING THE LOAD

My father makes lovely knots  
and I appreciate his virtuosity  
as one loop seems to disappear  
through another

till there's a massive load of junk  
bound hard, as if welded,  
to his roof rack.  
"Hold the rope firmly  
while I secure the load"  
he commands with detachment  
and I obey  
seeing love in his careful knots  
that I have never seen in him.

## ROSS CLARK

### HISTORY

"History is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake"

Stephen Dedalus

Falling asleep on the sofa,  
the newspaper covers my face.

Hours later I startle awake,  
scramble my broadsheet puppet

to the floor, and get up  
to my interrupted life.

Later still, I discover  
the headlines reversed

in smudgy shadows  
across my forehead.