

## NICK SYKES

### CITYSCAPE

I see three trees  
merge into one  
scythe circling  
a distant vision  
of blue-grey verticals  
from synthetic dreams —  
grasping for the sky,  
struggling and suffering,  
arrested and calmed,  
by the limbs and the fingers  
of the tree.

## GREG JOHNS

### BURNING OFF

Backyard fire: the gum tree smoked.  
And for a moment the spirit slipping  
through fingers of its outspread  
palm, like half-spun wool, congealed  
into a snake. The whole suburb stopped  
in awe, caressed by that slow coiling;  
charmed out of existence.  
Choked on one suspended breath,  
groping for the touchstone  
of mountain in the place  
where fire, once, and every day,  
here now, and everywhere,  
gives up the ghost.