

AMERICAN SAHARA
Sarah McWilliams
Phoenix College
Honorable Mention, Poetry

Pink Mountain
Like a passed out Camel
Lit
By the sun always sinking but
Never gone too far.

He rests his chin
On the strip-malled desert floor
Where pockets of souls
Commingle in the heat:
Chicano, White, Black
Native. Lost Boys of Sudan,
Lost Rednecks of Kentucky.

In his Sahara in the West
Hummers barrel down streets
Flanked by day workers
While the wheelchair-bound await
Slouching white and purple buses.

All the smaller creatures,
Coyote, Snake, Man,
Scurry through this strange city
Churning dust into asphalt, concrete.

It takes getting out
Of the stuccoed maze,
Climbing a thousand feet
Onto the back of the beast

It takes suffering the glare,
The grit and prickling weeds
To reach a point, turn and see

The turquoise pools of water
And palms laid at the animal's feet
And at the feet of other giants
Dozing all around.