

POETRY PACK

SPRING



BAREFOOT
BODY
TRAINING

TWICE BLESSED

by David Whyte

So that I stopped
there
and looked
into the waters
seeing not only
my reflected face
but the great sky
that framed
my lonely figure
and after a moment
I lifted my hands
and then my eyes
and I allowed myself
to be astonished
by the great
everywhere
calling to me
like an old
and unspoken
invitation,
made new
by the sun
and the spring,

and the cloud
and the light,
like something
both
calling to me
and radiating
from where I stood,
as if I could
understand
everything
I had been given
and everything ever
taken from me,
as if I could be
everything I have ever
learned
and everything
I could ever know,
as if I knew
both the way I had come
and, secretly,

the way
underneath
I was still
promised to go,
brought together,
like this, with the
unyielding ground
and the symmetry
of the moving sky,
caught in still waters.

Someone I have been,
and someone
I am just,
about to become,
something I am
and will be forever,
the sheer generosity
of being loved
through loving:
the miracle reflection
of a twice blessed life.





WHEN I AM AMONG THE TREES

by Mary Oliver

When I am among the trees,
especially the willows and the honey locust,
equally the beech,
the oaks and the pines,
they give off such hints of gladness.



I would almost say that they save me, and daily.
I am so distant from the hope of myself,
in which I have goodness, discernment,
and never hurry through the world
but walk slowly, and bow often.

Around me the trees stir in their leaves
and call out, "Stay awhile."
The light flows from their branches.



And they call again, "It's simple," they say,
"and you too have come
into the world to do this, to go easy, to be filled
with light, and to shine.



TODAY

by Billie Collins

If ever there were a spring day so perfect,
so uplifted by a warm intermittent breeze

that it made you want to throw
open all the windows in the house

and unlatch the door to the canary's cage,
indeed, rip the little door from its jamb,

a day when the cool brick paths
and the garden bursting with peonies

seemed so etched in sunlight
that you felt like taking

a hammer to the glass paperweight
on the living room end table,

releasing the inhabitants
from their snow-covered cottage

so they could walk out,
holding hands and squinting

into this larger dome of blue and white,
well, today is just that kind of day.



SPRING

by Barbara Hepburn, 1966



In conjunction with the title, the ovoid form of *Spring* suggests Hepworth's long-standing concerns with the cycles of nature and the promise of rebirth. She shared these themes with Brancusi, whose studio had so impressed her in 1933 and whose work invested the egg with formal purity and conceptual complexity.

In Hepworth's lost early work *Figure (Mother and Child)*, 1933 (BH 52, repr. J.P. Hodin, Barbara Hepworth, 1961, pl.52), the sheltered child had been ovoid in shape. In 1946, at a time when she first exhibited the carved version of *Oval Sculpture*, 1943 (Tate Gallery T00953), she recognised in her early work the 'simple realistic oval forms of the human head or of a bird' ('Approach to Sculpture', *Studio*, vol.132, no.643, Oct. 1946, p.97).

Oval Form with Strings and Colour continued this passage from realism to abstract form. With its bronze version, *Spring*, and a similar work in Swedish green marble, *Oval with Black and White*, 1965 (BH 387, artist's estate, Bowness 1971, pl.127), the ovoid was simultaneously explored in three different materials in 1965-6.

Commentary by Matthew Gale.