

Air

See how it takes the shape of the delphinium, holding
blooms in sway as if it were the sculptor's mold

for delphinium, singing delphinium, delphinium
as it bends the flower to the ground.

See how gently it borrows scent from plum blossom
or else revels in winter's blast off Lake Michigan.

Consider how democratic it is, content
to inflate the child's balloon with fun,

the soldier's chest with mustard gas. Equally
happy to fill the lungs of Genghis Khan or Gandhi.

Who would dispute its glad adaptability, yesterday
whipping across the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro,

today just a wisp teasing the petals of the cattleya orchid
where the Brazilian hummingbird feeds.

Tell me—in us, around us, part of us—when has it
not been all about the hum, the winging, the rapture.