

Fall 1981

Von Portheim

Stefanie Marlis

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cutbank>

 Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Marlis, Stefanie (1981) "Von Portheim," *CutBank*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 17 , Article 30.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cutbank/vol1/iss17/30>

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in CutBank by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.

VON PORTHEIM

The iris that were arranged in the baby's breath
are in the compost. The inconspicuous talents
we have: arranging bouquets, recognizing rock & roll tunes,
remembering birthdays.

If we were flowers perhaps the sticky yellow dots clinging
to our stamens, maybe
the rigid air we rest our stems against as we lean into
living rooms, would be marvels.

We are concerned with our desires. One after another intense
blue flame burns us up. We don't admire the modest
gifts as we do the fire red poppies absolutely red
in a field in Greece. We are like Henry James as he wrote
from Europe — how much more the States mean now.
The same I suppose with our own blood. Seeing
my Viennese father at 67 sitting under the wisteria,
here, in California I am ready to listen to our long list
of minor royalty, as the ebony bees fly up.