UNKNOWN FACES (Pogon, Poland 2000)

In Pogon, on a sunny day in August
58 years ago
Not far from Auschwitz
My mother was screaming
In front of her home,
When wind swept away
To the stomping of feet

On the streets we now walk,
We see a corner brown house
Drenched in the summer smell
Of ragged lawn blotched
And stained by oil
From a mower in the hands
Of a man who smiles at us
With slight shoulders
And curved eye

And greets us through a fence
With trembling hands
And whose angular face
Leads us into the house

Where „the rooms are different,
Smaller, dirtier”, my mother says,
Inching along the corridor
Trying not to awaken the dead
Stopping once to press her hands

Against musty wallpaper
Full of printed flowers,
Pulling at the edges sticking out
As if peeling skin.

(Steven Pelcman)