

LAURELYN WHITT

CONCH SHELL, MID-CONTINENT

In the middle of the continent
I raise a conch shell to my ear,

listen to the moan
of an ocean.

Down in the valley buffalo
stir uneasily, stamp
their feet.

When I raise the conch to my lips
and blow

they swing their great heads
slowly, side to side,

as though winter were here
and the sweet grasses
deep in snow.

That night I dreamt the Pacific

breaching its shoreline,
washing east to meet

the Atlantic's waters,
already pooling at my feet.

Beneath the surface, a swell
of canary-gold canola

the violet blues of flax.

The odd, disoriented flounder
eyes the North American seabed

with skepticism;

none of the predictions of global
warming prepared it for this.